Pol. G.
600 L - 1 Mac Cuilagh

<36640126310011

<36640126310011

Bayer. Staatsbibliothek

THE

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

OF

FREE NATIONS.

Vol. I.—THE GREEKS.

THE

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

OF

FREE NATIONS,

CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO

THEIR DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS AND EXTERNAL POLICY.

BY

W. TORRENS M^cCULLAGH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186 STRAND.

MDCCCXLVI.

BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS.

TO

THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE

THESE VOLUMES ARE INSCRIBED,

AS A TRIBUTE OF UNFEIGNED RESPECT

FOR HIS WISDOM AS A STATESMAN

AND HIS PRIVATE WORTH.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

PRIMARY ELEMENTS OF GREEK LIFE.

	Page
The Land and its Inhabitants	1
Hellenes and Pelasgi	2
Hero-kings	3
Sense of justice and right	4
Condition of the conquered race	6
Hesiod the poet of the people	7
Pelasgic civilisation	7
Architectural remains	8
Maritime knowledge	8
Traditional character	9
Religion	9
Emigration to Italy	10
Tyrrhenian piracies	10
Lenient temper of the Ionians	11
Diversity of occupations	12
Decline of Hellenic royalty	13
Ascendancy of race	15
Progress of society	15
Growth of energy	16

Page

Maritime adventure 17
Hellenic piracy 18
Navigation 19
Tendency to migration 19
Dorian and Ionian colonies 20
City-states 21
Extent of coast 22
Commerce creates a wealthy class 23
Jealousy of the nobles 23
Gradual changes 24
Exclusive privileges of the nobles 25
Gerusia and bulè 26
Timocracy and genocracy 26
City-states stimulate industry 27
The popular assembly 28
Eligibility to office 29
Struggles between the nobles and the people 30
Triumph of popular right 31
Want of a recognised authority 31
Æsymnetæ 32
Their peaceful policy 33
Beneficial effects of their rule 35
Incompatibility of their office with permanent freedom . . 36
Experience a bitter teacher 37
Æsymnetæ become tyranni 39
Change of policy 39
New taxes 39
Body-guards 39
Overthrow of the tyranni 40
Necessity of having settled laws 40

CHAPTER II.

HOW INDUSTRY AND FREEDOM TOGETHER GREW IN GREECE.

Desire for legislation 41
Law-less rule 42
Poetry 43
The sages 43
The true lawgivers of Greece 44
Diversity of codes 45

Page

Public census 46
Spirit of invention 47
Earthen-ware of Samos 47
Dyes 47
Competition 48
Porcelain of Cos 48
Alabaster-works of Sicyon 48
Absence of monopoly 48
Extent of exportations 48
Samian manufactures of gold and silver 49
Exports of fruit and wine 49
Public works 49
Political condition 50
Siphnos and its ware 50
Chios 51
Enterprise and bravery of the Chians 51
Phocæa 52
Feuds with the Phœnicians 52
Greek mines first worked by the Phœnicians 53
Abandonment of Phocæa 54
Chians refuse to sell them the Œnusiæ 54
Phocæans in Corsica 54
Subsequent migrations 55
Miletus 55
"Aeinautæ" and "Cheiromacha" 55
Ionic League 56
Inland states 57
Arcadia 57
Achaia 58
Thebes 58
Epidamnus 59
Elis 60
Coal-mines 60
Argive states 61
Ægina 62
Navy and currency of the Æginetans 62
Prohibition of Attic wares 63
Eubœa 63
Origin of the office of consul 63
Want of redress for commercial injuries 65

Page
Instincts of industry 65
Appointment of *proxeni*, or consuls 66
Corinth, its early trade 67
The first triremes 68
Liberality of spirit 68
Carriage of goods across the Isthmus 69
Political system of the Corinthians 69
Foreign policy 69
Opposed to Spartan ascendancy 70
Non-intervention 71
Colonial policy 72
Corcyra resists taxation by Corinth 72
Potidæa, Sicyon, Chalcedon, and Byzantium 73
Megara 73
Apollonia 73
Domestic policy of Corinth 74
Origin of the Isthmian games 75
Industrial objects 76
Variety of attractions 77
Temple of Neptune 78
National benefit of the games 79
Influence social not political 79
Fusion of races 80

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE WISE GREW STRONG.

Athens 83
Parity of the Greek states 85
Progress of society in Attica peculiar 86
Early attempts at legislation 87
Need of practical experience 88
Laws of Draco 89
Character of Solon 89
Spirit of his legislation 90
His enmity to monopoly 92
Inducement to foreigners to reside at Athens 93
Foreign produce 93
Export of manufactures 95

Page

Proficiency of Athenian artisans 96
Furniture 96
Luxuries and comforts 97
Articles of dress 97
Modifications of taste 98
Iron, tin, and copper trade 99
Import of iron ore 99
Armour and cutlery 100
Import of tin from Britain 100
Freedom of labour and of sale 101
Prohibition of Æginetan wares 101
Industrial policy 102
Inconsistencies in legislation 103
Provision-laws 104
Extent and population of Attica 105
Produce of corn insufficient for the people 105
Regard for agriculture 106
Introduction of foreign corn 107
Results 107
Population and production 107
Laws of export 109
Export of figs 110
Derivation of the epithet "sycophant" 110
Honey 111
Oil 111
Foreign corn entered at Piræus 112
Licenses to trade 112
Law against engrossing 113
Commercial legislation 113
Foreigners at Athens 114
Market-places 116
Regulations regarding freights 116
Return-cargoes 117
Borrowed capital 118
Rate of interest 119
Carthaginian tokens of sealed leather 120
Athenian currency 120
Commercial police 121
Laws of debtor and creditor 121
Liberation of Plato by his friends 122

Page
Punishment of frauds 122
Division of labour 123
Emporia 124
Excise and customs 124
Barter 125
Commercial relations with foreign states 126
Etruscans 126
Their relations with the Carthaginians 128
The first commercial treaty on record 128
Reciprocity treaty between Rome and Carthage, 500 B.C. . 130
Silence of Latin chroniclers regarding it 130
Polybius and Livy 131
General scope of the treaty 132
Limitations on Roman piracy 133
Specific provisions of the treaty 134
Free trade 135
Second commercial treaty, 348 B.C. 136
Roman incursions into Africa and Sardinia 137
Sicilian markets 139

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE STRONG GREW VAIN.

Progress of society 141
Patriotism 142
Nationality 143
The Persian invasion 144
Conduct of the various states 145
The Athenians forsake their homes 147
Defeat of Xerxes 148
Return of the people 148
National intoxication 149
Vanity of Athens 149
Claims the hegemony of the sea 150
The right of hegemony 150
Maritime empire 152
Aristides and Themistocles 153
Effects of a war-policy 154
Coercion and usurpation by Athens 155

Page

Discontent of the allies 156
Reproaches of the Mityleneans 157
Rights of Athenian citizenship conferred on their dependencies 158
Popular ambition 159
Naval power of Athens 160
Athenians declare themselves accountable to none . . . 161
Pericles 163
Phidias appointed superintendant of public works . . . 163
Public edifices of Athens 163
Taunt of Pericles 165
Misapplication of the synteleia 166
Fortifications 166
Cost of the public buildings 166
Statue of Athenè 167
Demand for labour 167
Its precarious nature 168
Amusements for the people 167
Fees to the dicasts and ecclesiasts 169
Exhaustion of the contributions of the allies 170
Ability of Pericles 170
Inquiry into the state of the revenue 171
Phidias cast into prison 172
Pericles prepares his financial statement 172
Adopts the counsel of Alcibiades 172
His character 173
Dialogue between Pericles and Alcibiades 174
Non-intercourse with the Megaræans 175
Peloponnesian war 176
The "age of Pericles" 176
His foresight 177
Treatment of Phidias 179
Effects of the misapplication of the synteleia 180

CHAPTER V.

THE ENEMIES OF INDUSTRY AND FREEDOM AMONG THE GREEKS THEMSELVES.

Ostensible cause of the Peloponnesian war 181
Its real causes 182

Page

Antagonism of the Doric and Ionic systems 183
Lacedæmonia 184
Spartans, Laconians, and Helots 184
Feelings and ideas of the dominant race 185
Theory of Greek oligarchy 186
Military habits and discipline 187
Theft enjoined as an exercise 188
Infanticide 188
Fear of over-population 189
Precautions against revolt 189
The crypteia 190
Disappearance of two thousand helots 191
The curse of bondage 191
Political organisation 192
Laws of Lycurgus 193
Spartan kings 194
The Ephori 195
False ideas regarding Lacedæmon 196
City of Sparta 197
Want of monuments and other embellishments 197
Negative principles 198
Want of literature 198
Contempt of eloquence 199
Absence of historic remains 199
The censorship 200
Its benumbing effects 202
Spartans fail of retaining their ascendancy 203
Free-labour states of Peloponnesus 205
Regarded with apprehension by Sparta 206
Crete 207
Its Doric polity 208
Natural advantages 209
Contributes nothing to the fame of Greece 210
Liberty acquired too late 210
Non-intercourse of Sparta with neighbouring states . . 210
Hollowness of its claims to purity and reverence . . . 211
Foreign policy 212
Continual aggressions 213
Conduct during the Persian invasion 214
Mutual jealousy of Sparta and Athens 215

Page

Sparta claims the protectorate of Greece 217
Is opposed by Thebes 217
Epaminondas invades Laconia 218
Fear of the Spartans 218
Vacillation of the helots 219
Liberation of Messenia 220
Restoration of Ithome 222
Undiminished disaffection 223
Concessions too long delayed 224
Abortive attempts at retrogressive reform 225
Decline of Sparta not to be attributed to the ephori . . . 227
The real causes of its fall 228

CHAPTER VI.

IONIC LIFE.

Contrast between Athens and Sparta 230
Athenian character 231
Constitution of society 232
Citizenship and denizenship 233
Distinctions of rank 233
Social exclusiveness 234
Liberal tone of social feeling 235
Its influence on political thought and action 236
Megara's jealousy of Athens 236
Instability of its prosperity 237
Its commerce and manufactures 238
Low condition of its operatives 239
Respect for ancestry 239
Landed property 240
Properties and tenancies 241
Geomori 242
The priesthood 242
Physicians 243
Hereditary professions 244
Epicharmus 245
Female physicians 246
Apprenticeship 247

Page

Gymnasia 247
The rival pupils of Phidias 248
Architects 249
Music and the drama 250
Literary rewards 251
Chaplets, crowns, and statues 251
Merchant-statesmen 252
Interests of industry promoted 253
Resident aliens 253
Regulations respecting them 254
Laws of naturalisation 255
Ancient jealousy of foreigners subsides 256
Rewards of labour 257
Hippodamus, the Milesian 258
Athenian slaves 259
Degrees of slavery 260
Domestic servants 260
Insolvent debtors 261
Increase of the labouring classes 261
Laws protecting slaves 262
Public opinion regarding them 263
Hieroduli 264
Amelioration of the condition of slaves 264
Agricultural labourers 265
"Natural advantages" of Attica 266
Peculiarity of its soil 267
Landholders 267
Absence of legislative protection to agriculture 268
Value of land 269
Desire to invest capital in landed property 270
Export of marble 271
Dialogue between Socrates and Aristarchus 271
Philosophy of industry 273
Fable of the dog and the sheep 274
Progressive rise of prices 275
The precious metals 275
Cost of living 276
Necessaries and luxuries 277

CHAPTER VII.

ATTIC WAYS AND MEANS.

	Page
Early taxes in Attica	279
Revenue of the kings and æsymnetæ	280
Legislative taxation	281
Rating by Solon	281
Extension of the suffrage	283
Customs and excise	285
Liturgies	286
Trierarchies	288
Income and expenditure	289
Property-taxes	290
"Benevolences"	291
General spirit of taxation	292
Other sources of revenue	292
Silver-mines of Laurium	293
Synteleia	294
Ionic Zollverein	295
Fees to the dicasts	296
Evils of judicial centralisation	297
Perversion of the jury system	298
Corruption	299
Payment of the ecclesiasts	300
Provision for the poor	301
Law of Agyrrhius	302
Twofold ill effect	303
Aristophanes	303
Industrial character of the Athenians undermined	303
Politics a trade	304
Devotion to the public service	306
The cost of cheap judges	308
The habitual craving for excitement	309
Theoricon	309
Evils of fiscal inquisition	312
Increase of slaves	313
Lower wages and dearer food	314
Revival of the laws against engrossing	315

Page
Food-usurers 315
Supplies of foreign corn 316
The corn-dealers 317
Project of emigration by Isocrates 318
Lycurgus, the treasurer 319
Xenophon's plan of financial reform 320
Proposed duties on tin and lead 320
Social evils not eradicated 321
Decline of Athens 321
Decay of Grecian commerce 322
Tenacity of Athenian rule 324
Migrations of trade 325
Asiatic Ionians 325
Rhodes 327
Injured by an earthquake 328
Pride and energy of the Rhodians 328
Free gifts from their allies 329
Motives 329
Presents from Ptolemy and Seleucus 330
From the Syracusans 331
Maritime laws of Rhodes 332

APPENDIX.

First commercial treaty between Rome and Carthage . . 333
Second commercial treaty 335

BAYERISCHE
STAATS-
BIBLIOTHEK
MUENCHEN

THE

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF FREE NATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

PRIMARY ELEMENTS OF GREEK LIFE.

"Now man's right arm is law; for spoil they wait,
And lay their mutual cities desolate;
With favour graced the evil-doer stands,
Nor curbs with shame or equity his hands;
Yet while the gods a weight of care bestow
Some good is intermingled with the woe." [1]

THE dawn of history found Greece in the possession of several kindred clans, who, differing in lineage, dialect, and character, from the aboriginal people of the land, lived upon terms of neighbourly hostility amongst themselves.

Warlike tradition loved to sing of a time indefinitely remote, when their Hellenic ancestors had come from steed-famed Thessaly, and imposed the impress of their worship and their rule on the Pelasgic race.

[1] Hesiod, Works and Days, v. 161, &c.

2

CHAP. I.

The leader of each immigrant band became lord of the shore or river-side, where the wheels of his chariot were stayed. Every where the battle-car is represented as "the distinctive feature of the heroic mode of warfare,"[2]—the true heroic throne. Conspicuous thereon, the chief was seen above the host, armed with the glittering spear, which superhuman art had fashioned, and more than mortal skill instructed men to aim. For were not Actæon and Achilles taught, at the foot of Pelion, the use of irresistible arms, by the wisest of the Centaurs?[3]

Hellenes and Pelasgi.

The Pelasgians gradually learned submission to what seemed the will of Fate.[4] Nor is it improbable that they acquired, in some degree, those feelings of awe and admiration which the Hellenic dynasties were not ill calculated to inspire. The portraitures of Theseus, Minos, and Jason, as well as those of Hector and Ulysses, are throughout expressive of courage and self-devotion, instinctive, boundless, and uncompensated; and their mythic aspect serves rather to heighten than diminish their interest and value, as vivid illustrations of the wants and struggles of society in its infant time. "Men in those days," we are told, "were frequently the guests of the gods, and were permitted to eat at their table, because of their justice and virtue."[5]

Transcendant worth[6] was the primary sanction of the heroic legitimacy—a more plausible claim to

[2] Wachsmuth, Historical Antiquities of the Greeks, Vol. I. § 12.

[3] Homer, Iliad, I. 149.

[4] Muller, Dorians, Introduction, § 8.

[5] Pausanias, Lib. VIII. cap. 2, § 5.

[6] Αρετη.

CHAP. I.

Heroic royalty.

right divine than many which have been put forth in more enlightened days. Even in the more prosaic periods of Hellenic royalty, personal strength, beauty, and daring, were inseparably associated with the idea of command among a race whose business in life was war. Sagacity, fortitude, energy, and self-reliance, were presumed to accompany these external attributes;[7] and where such qualities were signally wanting, hereditary right, so far at least as the claim of seniority was concerned, was often disregarded. Seniority itself availed but little. Neleus disdained to recognise his deformed brother Medon, until the Delphic oracle had decided in his favour;[8] and among the Spartans, the son first born after the accession of his father to the throne succeeded to the exclusion of an elder brother.[9] "Homer's kings are no Asiatic despots."[10] Between the different degrees of Hellenic chivalry a certain equality at all times prevailed, which the fewness of their numbers, compared with the population amidst whom they dwelt, and the hereditary pride of a dominant race, alike tended to preserve. We find the Doric nobles, too, in after times, assuming to themselves the epithet of "the Equals,"[11] — no inexpressive memorial of their origin and definition of their power.

How long the hero kings, in the estimation of their kindred followers, sustained the superhuman

[7] Pausanias, Lib. VIII. cap. 1, § 2.

[8] Ibid. Lib. VII. cap. 2, § 1.

[9] Herodotus, Lib. VII. cap. 3.

[10] Hermann, Political Antiquities of the Greeks, chap. 3, § 55.

[11] Ὅμοιοι. Muller, Dorians.

CHAP. I.

part they undertook to play, we know not. We may venture to believe, however, that in a state of society where the intricacies of artificial right had not yet arisen,[12]—where the occupations of the community were similar and few,—and where in general the heroic realm did not much exceed the circle of personal knowledge, a simpler wisdom might suffice for government, and less temptation to abuse irresponsible power existed, than under other circumstances there would have been. Nor shall we wholly err, perhaps, if we imagine, that the mutual belief of prince and people in the essential difference of their natures, taught both a disposition unlike any with which we can readily sympathise. It appears not unlikely that the imagined consciousness of more than mortal power may have chastened and elevated the spirit of rule; while the continual and often wayward resistance by which its temper in more unbelieving times is daily ruffled, was held in check by a loyalty savouring quite as much of devotional as of prudential feelings.

Sense of justice.

Yet if wanton rebellion was regarded as impiety, because authority was deemed divine, the natural sense of right due to man by man was never wholly obliterated. Justice was to the prince—as Fate was to Zeus,—a power whose mandates he might neglect, but could not with impunity disobey. Signal oppressions, even before they armed the nobles or

[12] Thirlwall, History of Greece, Vol. I. chap. 6.

populace to resist were openly denounced by the poets and those who claimed the gift of prophecy. Homer is unsparing of his rebukes to tyranny,[13] and "Hesiod could write like a downright Froudeur."[14] Zeus the Avenger was invoked against royal crimes; and expiatory sacrifices were performed by the penitent Orestes, and other equally exalted exiles, at the shrine of Apollo.[15] When the obdurate neglected to make satisfaction for the injury he had committed, and to purify himself in the sight of heaven, signal judgments were looked for undoubtingly. And the terrors of divine retribution were not likely soon to fall asleep in a land whose structure and atmosphere were rife with fitful portents. The caverned hills, upon whose side the Hellenic citadel was built, sent forth unexpected streams, that inundated in a night all the pastures round; as suddenly the gush of the torrent would subside, and nought remain but a silver thread of warning. The brilliant sky, whose lustre, doubtless, had so great an influence on the spiritual temper of the entire nation, would inexorably refuse, for many days together, to reveal itself; and then, from the resentful brow of Olympus the fearful lightning, with its dread accompaniments, would break forth, causing the heart of unphilosophic tyranny to quail. "Memorials of

[13] Homer, Iliad, I. 231; I. 80, 84. — Odyssey, III. 215; IV. 692.

[14] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 18, note.

[15] Muller, Dorians, Book II. chap. 8, § 6.

CHAP. I.

the ancient anarchy of nature,"[16] never wholly ceased. The condition of the country, as well as its possessors, seemed to be the result of fearful convulsions and revolutions, the memory of which was perpetuated in legend.[17] Sparta and Sicyon were, in later times, the sport of earthquakes; the deity forewarned the men of Delos of the calamities impending over Ionia by making the island tremble;[18] Eubœa, as being peculiarly liable to experience the admonitions of its subterranean rulers, was called "the easily moved;" and Rhodes was so violently shaken, that the prophecy of the Sibyl was fully accomplished.[19]

Condition of the conquered race.

As a birthright the Hellenes claimed, both in peace and war, exclusive sway; and their kings are depicted as endued with unlimited power over "the earth-born multitude."[20] In most of the districts where the conquerors were of the Doric tribe, the condition of the people bordered closely on that of a servile order,[21] and they were compelled, during many generations, to till the fields their forefathers had owned, for the support of their new masters, who, during the intervals of war, were thus enabled to "enjoy an independent, easy life, by retaining both the conquered country and people in subjection."[22]

It was, doubtless, the sight of popular suffering

[16] Wachsmuth, Introduc. p. 5.
[17] Hermann, chap. 1, § 6.
[18] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 98.
[19] Pausanias, Lib. II. cap. 7.
[20] Homer, Iliad, I. 249.
[21] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 32.
[22] Muller, Dorians, Book I. chap. 4, § 7.

and humiliation that inspired the touching "appeal to kings,"[23] in which, under the emblems of the hawk and the nightingale, Hesiod intended to rebuke the social tyranny that preyed upon the defenceless and despairing many, regardless of their deprecating cries and their intrinsic claims to respect and admiration. For they were no barbarous or unworthy people. They are uniformly portrayed as the earliest tillers of the soil. It was believed that they first learned to yoke oxen to the plough. The praise of one of their patriarchal kings was, that he had invented a corn-mill;[24] of another, that he taught his people how to bake bread: and the same prince, having learned from Adrista the art of weaving in order that he might instruct them in it, his subjects, in grateful remembrance of his benefits, called their country Arcadia from the time Arcas reigned.[25] Even the vanity of Egypt owned, that from a Pelasgic traveller they had been taught the mode of measuring land. "Writ-

Pelasgic civilization.

[23] Hesiod, Works and Days, v. 186, &c. Though probably born at Cuma, Hesiod lived many years at Ascra, a small town in Bœotia, where the oppression and exclusiveness of the dominant caste was as unrelenting as in Lacedæmon.

[24] Beckman, History of Inventions, Vol. I. p. 227. "The earliest instrument used for this purpose seems to have been the mortar, which was retained a long time even after the invention of mills properly so called. It appears, that in the course of time the mortar was made ridged and the pestle notched at the bottom, by which means the grain was rather grated than pounded. When a handle was added to the top of the pestle, that it might be more easily driven round in a circle, the mortar was converted into a hand-mill. We have reason to suppose that in every family there was a mill of this kind. Moses forbade them to be taken in pawn, for that, he says, is the same as to take a man's life in pledge."—(Exod. xi. 5, and Odyssey, VII. 103, and XX. 105.)

[25] Pausanias, VIII. 3, 4.

CHAP. I.

ing and art were not unknown to them;" and if their edifices were few, the marvelling epithet which, to our own fastidious day, still attributes them to Cyclopean architects, is the most significant tribute to their imperishable fame.

Pelasgic edifices.

"The most ancient architectural monuments in Europe, which may, perhaps, outlast all that have been reared in later ages, clearly appear to have been works of their hands. The earliest of them are so rude, that they seem, at first sight, to indicate nothing more than a capacity confined to undertakings which demanded much toil and little skill, and a state of society settled enough to encourage such exertions. The gradual progress that may be traced, through a series of easy transitions, from these shapeless masses to regular and well-contrived buildings, seems to shew, that in those of the rudest workmanship, the sense of symmetry — the most distinguishing feature in the Greek character — was only suppressed in the struggle of an untaught people with the difficulties that beset the infancy of art." [26]

And now, as modern research inquisitively gazes at these wondrous trophies of forgotten toil, and carefully compares and contrasts them with their counterparts in Italy, Epirus, and the western shore of Asia Minor, the old tradition seems to gain irrefragable confirmation, which ascribed to these ancient children of industry a considerable familiarity with maritime affairs. They shared with

[26] Thirlwall, History of Greece, Vol. I. p. 61.

the Carians—a contemporary, if not kindred tribe, who inhabited the isles—the primitive navigation of the Ægean sea. The example of the Phœnicians was before them;[27] and the frequent ascription of improvements and the introduction of new names and forms to the Egyptians sufficiently indicates the existence of an intercourse by sea with foreign nations.

Traditional character.

While Homer glorified the deeds of Hellenic chivalry, the peaceful virtues and industry of the Pelasgians had their memorials too. "Numerous traditionary accounts, of undoubted authenticity, describe them as a moral, brave, and honourable people,"[28] simple in their religious faith and bloodless in their offerings. Nor were their virtues or their sufferings forgotten. In Æschylus, the worth and purity of the aboriginal civilisation is delineated, indirectly it is true, but with vivid beauty and a deep feeling of the obligations which the national developement of later times was under to that which had passed away; and Hesiod, who was more especially the poet of the people, never mentions the primary stock, whence, for the most part, they were sprung, without reverence and affection.[29]

Religion.

We are told by Herodotus, that originally "the Pelasgians addressed the gods in prayer without distinctive names; for as yet they had not heard of

[27] Heeren, Historical Researches, Phœnicians, Vol. II. p. 27.

[28] Wachsmuth, Historical Antiquities of the Greeks, Vol. I. § 31.

[29] Hesiod, Works and Days.

CHAP. I.

any separate appellations, but designated the Powers of Heaven simply as *Theoi*, because they attributed to them the foundation of the world and distribution of all things. Only after a long lapse of time they learned the mythology of Egypt:" and he proceeds to tell how, in this manner, Greece acquired many of the objects of its later worship, "always excepting Neptune, for the knowledge of his divinity came from Lybia, his name of old being known among no other people than the Lybians, to whom he has always been a god."[30]

Pelasgic migration.

The first attempt at systematic colonisation from Greece is attributed to Œnotrus, the grandson of Pelasgus, who, with a fleet, passed over into Italy and founded a settlement there.[31] The accuracy of the legend is of little moment, save as it illustrates the popular belief of after times, that the tendencies of the aboriginal inhabitants of Greece were towards the sea. That their aim was traffic rather than war is denoted by a variety of minute circumstances, as well as by every thing we know of their character and policy.

Their legitimate enterprises have often been confounded with the piratical expeditions of the Tyrrhenians of a later period. These, it would appear, were a small and obscure tribe of the Pelasgic stock, "but little known, even in Hesiod's time, dwelling on remote coasts, and heretofore of unblemished reputation."[32] It is not till after the

[30] Herodotus, Lib. II. 50–52.
[31] Pausanias, VIII. c. 3. § 1.
[32] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. App. V.

Trojan war that Tyrrhenian piracies are mentioned;[33] and in that age it was not their sin alone. Habits of violence and daring adventure had been generated by the Hellenic system; and the evil, though held in check by the commonwealths of the more matured epoch, was, perhaps, never wholly extirpated.

Condition under the Ionians.

In Attica and elsewhere, however, the claims of Hellenic domination were either less vigorously asserted, or, by degrees, were less exactingly maintained. A temper more lenient and facile marked the Ionians every where. When they imposed their rites and names, they adopted, in turn, many usages and ideas which they found established. If they intruded, they did not wholly dispossess; and after resistance ceased, they were willing to blend hopes and interchange sympathies with the aboriginal occupants of the land. If they taught them something, they also learned from them much; and eventually, they came to live together in such unity, that national pride refused to own that there had ever been such distinctions, and popular memory persuaded itself that *demos* and *eupatridæ* were alike *autochthones*—children of the soil.[34]

While no general delineation, therefore, of the condition of society under the Hellenic dynasties would be accurate, differing, as it had already begun to do, in different states, it may perhaps be said that the distinctions of race were nearly identical with

[33] Thirlwall, Vol. I. p. 60.

[34] Isocrates, Panegyr. § 3.

CHAP. I.

Diversity of occupations.

those of avocation. The habits of the many were industrious, those of the few warlike. The former were used to peaceful labour, which the latter generally disdained. Where the spirit of conquest was kept alive, as in Crete, Sparta, and Bœotia, the ruling class continued to despise husbandry and trade, or sought to reap their fruits by the employment of slaves. In other states, when the exclusion of the industrious race was broken down, the habits of the dominant race were improved; "the well-born" engaged in commerce, and took pleasure in the pursuits of agriculture; while the possession of rights and privileges gave a higher and nobler stimulus to humble thrift and toil. But in the beginning it was not so; and hence one of the greatest difficulties we encounter when seeking to form clear conceptions of the earlier period of Greek life. It is requisite to keep constantly in view the antagonism of the two dissimilar races who dwelt together in the land, and at the same time to watch their silent but unceasing interaction, which, notwithstanding certain exceptions, resulted in that subtle fusion of moral and intellectual power which was manifested in the maturity of the national character. The great things accomplished by Greece—the deep wisdom of her utterance, the inextinguishable light shed from her self-taught art,—these were not Pelasgic nor Hellenic, but Greek,—the glories of a mingled race—a race whose constituent elements coexisted longer separate and distinct than any others upon record.

CHAP. I.

Powers of royalty decline.

By what especial means the primitive sanctions of the heroic monarchy were undermined we know not; that its decay was gradual is tolerably certain,[35] and the crisis of its fate has been ordinarily ascribed to the era, by some to the circumstances, of the Trojan war.[36] A striking difference of tone is observable between the political sentiments of the Iliad and the Odyssey. A struggle for power between the nobles and the prince is confessed throughout the latter; the confidence in royal wisdom and justice waxes faint and dim; and the possibility of changing the hereditary succession is not made matter of mysterious destiny, but calmly introduced as a probable transition. That the state of Ithaca was peculiar, and should not be taken as a sample of Greek political life at the time, is probably true; but the real value of the Odyssey in a historical point of view is that in its epic mirror are "shadowed forth the incipient efforts of the nobles against the declining monarchy."[37]

The Argives, we are told, were from a very

[35] Thirlwall, Vol. I. chap. 10.

[36] It has been supposed that the chieftains who accompanied the Atridæ to Troy made terms with them of a political kind ere their departure, as the price of their services; and that the companions of the other kings did the same. I fear the analogy of the middle ages, when the middle classes turned to account the necessities of their crusading suzerains, has suggested this idea. The mighty second growth of civilisation, after the political deluge in which the ancient world was lost, affords so many signal lights of historical parallel, that we are unconsciously led to ask for types and counterparts that never existed in the former, for all we are accustomed to regard as essential in the latter. I presume not, however, to say that such men as Wachsmuth, and other eminent classical critics, are wrong; I only venture to confess myself unsatisfied with their reasonings.

[37] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 18.

CHAP. I.

early period jealous of the regal power; to Cisus "they left nothing but the name of a king;" and having "capitally condemned Meltas, they deprived him of all authority."[38] The Messenian nobles killed Cresphontes; and the Erythræan chiefs threw their monarch into the sea. At Ephesus, the descendants of Androcles were unable to maintain their authority; and open war was levied by the Milesians against the house of Neleus.[39] The house of Cypselus lost the government of Arcadia, upon the discovery that the degenerate Aristocrates had taken a bribe from Lacedæmon.[40] A singular departure from the primitive notion of the heroic monarchy was the joint kingship, which appears to have arisen in the way of compromise between rival claimants, at Sparta and elsewhere. The inevitable tendency of such an expedient to subvert regal authority it is impossible not to see. "The greater number were compelled to content themselves with the first place in an aristocracy."[41] The next step was that of limiting the duration of the office to a fixed period. We read of annual prytanes at Corinth so early as the middle of the eighth century, B.C.; the name being changed along with the prerogative.[42] "In the course of these changes royalty became more and more responsible to the

[38] Pausanias, Book II. cap. 19. The sister of Cisus was espoused to Deiphontes, prince of Epidaurus, who was the fourth generation from Hercules, about 1074 years B.C.

[39] Wachsmuth, Vol. II. § 29.

[40] Pausanias, VIII. 5.

[41] Hermann, III. chap. 56, §

[42] Muller, Dor. Chron. Tables.

nobles; and frequently the name itself was exchanged for one simply equivalent to chief magistrate."[43]

Ascendancy of race.

Hellenic ancestry was still, however, the indispensable qualification for bearing rule. The great families in each state assumed the governments,[44] and long continued to fill its offices exclusively,—"all others being considered base and incapable."[45] In some places, as at Sparta, Cuma, Argos, and Cyrene, the title of *basileus*, or king, was still applied to the chief magistrate, who generally led the armies, and presided over the *agora*, or general assembly. But as intercourse increased, and the business of government began to be something more than matter of casual resource upon emergency, the necessity of selecting a certain number who should specially care for the interests of the community suggested the institution of the *gerusia*, or council of nobles, on whom the more frequently recurring cares of rule devolved.

The progress of society, however, gradually developed influences which first modified and then

[43] Thirlwall, Vol. I. chap. 10, p. 396.

[44] Such were the Codridæ, the Medontiadæ, the Alcmæonidæ, and the Gephyræi, at Athens; the Penthilidæ, at Mitylene; the Basilidæ, in Erythræ; the Neleidæ, in Miletus; the Basileis, at Ephesus; the Bacchiadæ, at Corinth; the Ctesippidæ, in Epidaurus; the Eratidæ, in Rhodes; the Hippotadæ, of Cos and Cnidos; the Aleuadæ, at Larissa; the Psoloeis and Œonolai, in Orchomenos; the Opheltiadæ and Cleonymidæ, of Thebes; all of whom, as their names bespeak, asserted heroic lineage. To these may be added the Ioxidæ, of Caria, who claimed descent from Theseus; the Theban Sparti, whose autochthony was unquestioned; and the Deucalionidæ, who had been lords of Delphi ever since the Flood.

[45] Hermann, chap. 3, § 58.

CHAP. I.

almost entirely overthrew this form of rule. The national spirit of Greece was hitherto in its infancy.

Growth of energy.

At the knees of its mythic parents it had learned to fear the gods, and to know itself for Greek, to regard its nature and destiny as different from that of the rest of the world, and to believe that its superior excellence might win acknowledgment in whatsoever field it listed. Not that such ideas were in the youthful mind of Greece with reasoned consciousness, but they were there as portions of that idiosyncracy which so often exceeds in the power to direct and to impel, the influence of the most matured and enlightened policy. As Greek life grew its pulse throbbed more and more vividly. The legends of an earlier time warmed it into eager thoughtfulness; it longed, it yearned, it felt within itself expanding might and hope: it knew not yet distinctly what to do, but not to do something was intolerable. Curiosity, doubt, conjecture troubled its light sleep, till enterprise, discovery, and adventure, came to be its waking thought as well as restless dream. Its moral sinews grew by exercise; habit and ability made each other strong; and thus throughout the whole history of after years, in peace and war, in arts and literature, in stranger lands and in its own, until the palsy of decrepitude had seized upon each fibre of its frame, the dominant, unresting, and unquenchable attribute that characterised the spirit of Greece above all others was — ENERGY. Sustained by this irresistible impulse, we shall find it daring all things, inquiring into all things, — tasting, and

coveting, and for a season appropriating, all things to itself, from the fruits and gems of one clime to the religious rites and mysteries of another, — every thing save repose: that alone occurs not in the history of Greece. And hereafter we shall find how this superb but inordinate energy, having compassed land and sea in quest of food, turned insatiable upon itself, and perished, self-devoured.

Hellenic piracy.

But over the green vigour of its prime these shadows were not flung. Even before heroic times had passed away this passion for active and laborious effort sought occupation in maritime adventure. A desire, perhaps, of adding to their scanty means operated with some of the more thoughtful of the nobles; and the ambition of forming new states, where as chief founders they might hope for consequence far above that which as younger brethren they were likely ever to enjoy at home, stimulated others. But the love of excitement and novelty impelled as many, doubtless, to build ships, and man them. The growth of their order, if not of the general population, began to inclose their hereditary quarrelling grounds; and, seeking new fields of warfaring pastime, they turned towards the sea. "Those who dwelt near to the shore or in the isles, once they had hazarded to cross over in ships to one another, grew thievish, and, under the leadership of their most powerful chiefs, wandered abroad in quest of booty. They would fall suddenly upon towns which were unfortified or built in a straggling manner, and rifle them of all that they contained:

CHAP. I.

such acts were not regarded as disgraceful, but rather as having in them something glorious."[46] Legends, like that of the Argonauts, and traditionary examples, like the crusade against Troy,[47] invested exploits of the kind with no little of romance. They were attended with considerable danger; the scenes were novel, and the trophies of success brought home were captives, often of high degree, whose sudden change of fortune formed a ceaseless theme of curiosity and interest. The Hellenes could not forget that their forefathers' title to the broad lands of Hellas was that of the sword; and the distinction does not at best seem very wide in point of humanity between entering forcibly into other men's possessions with a view to permanently engrossing them, and violating their sanctity for the purpose of carrying off all that they contain.

Under such a system of rule, or rather absence of rule and order, it was impossible that trade should thrive. The Hellenic idea of property was spoil, whether acquired by land or sea. The picture of industrial insecurity in these chivalrous times is graphically drawn by Thucydides. "The inhabitants were frequently shifting their habitations, being compelled to abandon their abodes to the invading violence of superior numbers. As yet traffic was not, or mutual intercourse, save with fear, by sea or land; and every man so husbanded his field as but to work out a living for the time,

[46] Thucydides, I. 5.

[47] See the boast of Menelaus, Odyss. III. 72–301.

but without stock or capital, forasmuch as it was doubtful how soon others might break into the territory, and carry all away."[48] CHAP. I.

Yet out of evil cometh good. A knowledge of navigation grew up during this rapacious and violent time, which was found most serviceable for other purposes in other hands. While the leaders of privateering or predatory expeditions were roving on their lawless errands through the narrow channels and squally friths of the Propontis and Ægean, a class of mariners was formed, dexterous, hardy, and familiarised with the intricate navigation of their peculiar region. After some time we hear of better things than rapine and spoil. To pretend any accurate assignment of dates would be affectation; but many and curious indications of a changing temper of society begin to be perceptible.

Tendency to migration.

An universal tendency to permanent migration led, unconsciously, to more than one novel and remarkable developement of the national character. In some instances portions of the inhabitants of one district forced their way into another. It was thus Amyclæ, Geronthæ, and Helos, fell beneath the yoke of Sparta. Somewhat later companies of adventurous men went forth to seek in distant lands new dwelling-places. Many of them were doubtless urged by discontent to wander far from their homes;[49] and this may in part account for their readiness, notwithstanding the tenacity where-

B.C. 786–626.

[48] Thucydides, I. 2.

[49] Ibid. I. 12.

CHAP. I.

with they clung to the essential forms and habits of Greek life, to innovate on those political institutions which they remembered without love. Each isolated band of emigrants had to provide for its necessities out of the moral and intellectual resources it contained within itself;[50] there were few conflicting claimants of hereditary authority among the exiles; in some cases there were none; and their place was supplied by those of ignoble pedigree whose ability or experience most fitted them to bear rule. In this way the fruitful isles not only of the Ægean and Ionian seas were colonised, but progressively emigrant seats arose in every creek of the indented coasts of Sicily and Southern Italy, as well as on the shores of Africa and Spain; until it might be truly said that all these countries "wore a Grecian fringe."[51]

B.C. 774–627.

In quick succession Metapontum, Croton, Syracuse, Leontini, Byzantium, Hybla, Gela, Cnidos, Locri, Selinus, Thera, Cyrene, Thapsos, Melos, Epidamnus, Gortyna, and Chalcedon, with a host of lesser note, were founded, some by Ionians, some by Dorians, some in part by each.[52] Miletus boasted that she had herself borne eighty daughters.[53] Scattered as these colonies were, and composed of elements infinitely various, it is not surprising that

[50] Thirlwall, chap. 12.

[51] "Atque hæc quidem veteris sunt Græciæ. Coloniarum, vero quæ est deducta a Graiis in Asiam, Thraciam, Italiam, Siciliam, Africam, præter unam Magnesiam, quam unda non adluat? Ita barbarorum agris quasi adtexta quædam videtur ora esse Græciæ." —Cicero, De Rep. II. Lib. IV.

[52] Muller, Dorians, Appendix, Chronological Tables.

[53] Pliny, Hist. Nat. Lib. V. cap. 29.

they should exhibit a vast diversity of form and character. But in one respect their primary condition seems to have been the same. They possessed no extent of territory; they were from the outset driven to rely upon their own resources, and the friendships they might form with neighbouring colonies, and the people in whose country they had come to dwell. Without domestic order, discipline, and industry, they could not hope to exist; and without some external polity, some aspect of unity, and consistency of purpose, they must have perished in isolation, or sunk to the level of a bandit life. They did neither. "The greater number of them struck root quickly and firmly, and many of them rose to a degree of prosperity higher than the parent states; nay, several had bloomed and were on the decline before the latter had fully developed their powers." [54]

City-states.

These colonies, if they did not first suggest, in all probability developed the idea of the City-State. When the old country saw that her scion communities throve without the possession of extensive territories, the desire of local government spread rapidly. The heroic notion of the unity of the state being centred in the royal line [55] was already shaken. Many of the less potent nobles saw, in the greater distribution of authority, a pathway opened to their ambition. Each family

[54] Hermann, chap. 4, § 75.

[55] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 17.

CHAP. I.

desired to rule supreme;[56] and this desire was gratified by the growth of towns. The Larissa of the Pelasgian prince, and the Hellenic citadel, were usually inland. The new centres of population were founded oftener on the coast.[57] In the days of the monarchy the word which subsequently was used to denote a city, and finally a state, signified no more than the castle of the prince.[58] It has even been doubted whether, with the exception of Argos, Thebes, Athens, and Calydon, Greece had any considerable towns prior to the Trojan war.[59] But as they were multiplied, and power was more distributed, the town became the seat of rule as the citadel formerly had been. The old province kingdoms were broken up.[60] Isle after isle, and city after city, learned to think and act for itself, and from this root sprang the commerce and the liberty of Greece.

Extent of coast.

The geographical conformation of Greece seemed every where to point attention to the sea as an element of national strength and progress. There were very few of the dominant tribes whose territory was not partially washed by its waves. While the coast of Italy was computed by the ancient geographer at a length equal to 2320

[56] Thirlwall, Vol. I. chap. 6. "At a distance from the capital, there may be more room to imagine that they exercised a separate jurisdiction as the heads of their tribes or clans."

[57] Huet, Mémoires sur le Commerce, Chap. XVI.

[58] Πολις.

[59] Wachsmuth, Appendix VIII.

[60] Pausanias, VIII. 4.

miles, that of Hellas extended to 2880 miles. When, therefore, the impetus to navigation was once given, the opportunities were almost universal.

Commercial intercourse every where advanced, and the existence of an intermediate, or, as we should say, a wealthy class began to be felt. Riches were no longer the exclusive attribute of the nobly born. The possession of wealth gradually elevated individuals and their families to a position where they were rendered capable of feeling the mortifications of social exclusion. The nobles saw with jealousy the progress of this class; and very soon in some places, as at Miletus, Corinth, Samos, Chalcis, and Ægina, took to trade as the best means of keeping pace with their new rivals.[61] They anxiously defended every where the usages and maxims which prescribed the inalienability of land. This had from the first been a fundamental principle of their system, which, as it claimed a monopoly of political power, naturally and consistently sought to fortify itself by a monopoly of that which, in primitive conditions of society, presents the most obvious means of social ascendancy, and almost the only secure source of wealth. The conquered lands had been the earliest portion of the aristocracy, and they remained the longest in their hands. Traces of a yeomanry, or free agricultural population, are perceptible in Attica, Arcadia, and some other places; but, generally speaking, the soil was still as

Commerce creates a wealthy class.

[61] Muller, Dorians, B. III. chap. 1, § 4.

CHAP. I.

conquering partition had left it—the heritage of confiscation entailed strictly on the few. The fields were tilled by the descendants of the aboriginal possessors; these lived in scattered and obscure hamlets: though not in actual bondage, they were at least wholly destitute of power. They were treated habitually with contempt by the lords of the soil, and in more instances than one with an injustice and cruelty which provoked, eventually, resistance and revenge.

Gradual changes.

Yet where no particular oppression had been exercised on individuals, the jealousy of exclusive power was slow in originating resistance. "In general it was a gradual inevitable change in the relative position of the higher and lower orders. In the natural progress of society, while the ruling body remained stationary, or was even losing a part of its strength, the commonalty, the class which, though personally free, was at first excluded from all share in the government, was constantly growing in numbers and wealth, was becoming more united in itself, more conscious of its resources, and more disposed to put forward new claims. One of the steps which led to this result was the increase which took place in the population of the cities, when the inhabitants of several scattered hamlets were collected within the same walls. This continued at all times to be considered as one of the most effectual methods of shaking the power of an oligarchy, and the most fatal blow which could be inflicted on the interests of the commonalty was to

disperse it again over the country in open villages. In the maritime towns, the class which drew its subsistence from manufactures, trade, and commerce, made still more rapid strides than in the inland districts, and, though more despised by the nobles, was less inclined to reverence their hereditary privileges than the cultivators of the land.[62] The nobles sought to strengthen their order by intermarriages and alliances of various political and social kinds. But, despite their utmost efforts, wealth gained on privilege.

Occasions of external danger were availed of by the excluded class to extort some new concession. At Cuma they obtained a curious compromise, whereby every man who lived within the walls and could keep a horse should have a voice in the assembly. At Ephesus and at Erythræ, where there was no general assembly, deputies from the townspeople were appointed, who sat with the nobility in council.

To the same influences we are, probably, to attribute the jealousy of any particular family obtaining undue preponderance, which is indicated in the Cnidian rule, forbidding the son to be a member of the gerusia during his father's life.[63] This has about it all the impress of a guarantee given upon some occasion of concession to the rich ig-nobles; and the general result appears to have

[62] Thirlwall, Hist. I. 10, p. 299.

[63] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. V. cap. 5, § 3.

CHAP. I.

been that the aristocracy of birth were forced to relax some of their ancient privileges, and to unite with the aristocracy of wealth; thus obviously strengthening their position and establishing the dominion of "rank and property." This change, we may believe, was oftener one of encroachment than violence; and it is a fact of much significancy that the *gerusia*, which properly denoted the hereditary council, and the *bule*, or timocratic assembly, are found co-existing in different states, and even together in the same; indicating the various degrees of concession which wealth had wrung from birth, and the various expedients resorted to for compromising the quarrel.

Rank and Property.

But if this new authority had its strength, it had its weakness also. Wealth, which had been now recognised as an alternative qualification for rule, admitting of infinite degrees, those who were upon a social level with their neighbours, and who yet fell short of the arbitrary wealth-mark of worth,[64] naturally resented an exclusion which was much less venerable, and, perhaps, less intelligible at the time than that of the original genocracy.[65] It seemed a deeply-rooted instinct of the Greeks to resist the exclusiveness, whether social or political, that was based on the mere possession of money, far more inveterately than that of a dominant race. They had submitted unresistingly to the one for

[64] Τιμημα, the rated value in the census-books.

[65] A phrase suggested by the German writers, as best expressing the opposite of timocracy, or power of property.

ages; but there is scarcely an instance where the distinctions of caste were broken down and a narrow pecuniary limit substituted instead, that discontent and further changes did not ensue. The exclusion that was absolute and insuperable was less mortifying to popular self-love than the barrier it had seen overpassed by a few, and which it was unwilling to confess beyond its own capacity to surmount. Where no hope is, there is no ambition—no social clambering—no political chagrin. It is the bitterness and envy of secret discontent that undermine proud systems and corrode the sanctions of authority, which may more safely rob a hundred than affront one: for mortified vanity is a more implacable rebel than the keenest sense of injury or hatred of oppression. Popular theories arise to give disaffection form and plan; but it is not the speculation of the wise or the plot of the ambitious rulers have most need to fear. Social heart-burnings are the true seeds of revolution; and the popular leader can do little more than watch their ripening.

City-states stimulate industry.

Meanwhile the increase of city-states, by stimulating invention and trade of every kind, had undermined exclusive power. The conquering race had hitherto enjoyed almost a monopoly of land, the only species of property once existing. Industry created various new descriptions of property, trade found ways of bartering them; and art, lending her inventive aid, devised means of transferring still more rapidly and easily the largest or the smallest portions of them. To the establishment of the towns, more particularly of the colonies, and to the

CHAP. I.

regular intercourse kept up between them, has been attributed the introduction of coined money among the Greeks.[66]

Popular Assembly.

The well-being and safety of each community depended upon its own prudence and spirit. The governing body were compelled to court the good-will of the many, and to affect, at least, to seek their sanction upon every occasion of importance. Where equal hazard must be incurred, or equal privations suffered, popular approval was indispensable; and thus crept in the habit of calling together all citizens dwelling within the walls to hear and to confer. From the earliest times there had been an assembly to which the people were invited on the eve of any public enterprise, or on peculiar religious occasions. But the agora was seldom convened; and in its deliberations none but chiefs were admitted to a share: the multitude's duty being to listen.[67] But, with the altered structure of society, its wants and powers had altered too. Imperceptibly the agora fades from our view, and in its stead we find a popular assembly, wherein the industrial middle class utters that which was its will. In the Doric states this assembly was termed *halia*; in the Ionic states, *ecclesia*. The agora was the gathering of a clan; the ecclesia the meeting of a burgher guard.

The select council still retained, however, the initiatory power, and left the people, for a considerable period, no higher function than that of

[66] Heeren, Historical Researches, Vol. VI. p. 10.

[67] Muller, Dorians, B. III. ch. 5, § 9; ibid. ch. 1, § 3; and Hermann, ch. 3, § 55.

negativing or affirming what was proposed to them. Peace or war was the most frequent subject for decision thus submitted to the assembly.[68] But in a country of quarrellers like Greece, this was a topic of no rare occurrence; nor were the growing interests of so many separate, yet adjacent states, capable of easy adjustment. Questions of difficult solution multiplied; considerations of delicate intricacy arose; this, too, had its use; the duties of forbearance, temper, vigour, self-devotion, unanimity, were thus diffused and kept alive by the very instinct of self-preservation. Without such virtues the city-state could not exist. Every neighbour was a rival, if not a foe; and the members of each independent community were thus practically schooled in the chief lessons of patriotism, as the only security for all which they possessed.

Eligibility to office.

Such feelings and habits could not long work without results in the commonalty. They were now a power in the state; a subordinate, a limited, perhaps a scarcely acknowledged power, but still a great and indispensable element in the business of rule. Their ideas of themselves were raised. They resented more keenly than ever their exclusion from executive trusts. Were they fit to consult for the common weal, and yet unworthy of magisterial rank? In reluctant change, concession is often but abandoning one anomaly to seek brief refuge in another. In some

[68] "This practice existed for a long time, even under the matured republics, and in form it was always retained."—Wachsmuth, § 38.

CHAP. I.

cases the magistracy was partially thrown open to all classes; in others it was still maintained as the exclusive heritage of the few. The shades of concession grow infinitely various, and we lose the power of comparing or appreciating them. Perhaps it is of little consequence that we are destitute of the history of these unequal struggles. Enough may be gleaned from the obscure annals of the time, to forbid the notion that any uniform developement of popular freedom was manifested at any assignable period. "The crisis, when the demos discovered the secret of its own power, in many states was long delayed; in some it never came."[69]

Continued struggles.

A thousand incidents of which we know nothing contributed, we may be sure, to hasten or retard the course of innovation; a thousand personal motives and passions swelled the tumult of contending claims on each particular scene. The multiplication of independent states had seemed at first to gratify the pride of the nobles; but it served eventually to concentrate also upon each of them the local envy of the multitude. Their comparative fewness was made more palpable; their personal faults were more closely scanned; their superior capacity for rule was subjected to severer tests when the ecclesia became a part of the regular government. The exclusion of the many from administrative functions was peculiarly untenable, because it was of necessity peculiarly

[69] Hermann, ch. 3, § 61.

offensive to the most active and aspiring men among the people. The ambition of such men as Cypselus[70] and Orthagoras, doubtless, contributed to the revolutions they successfully led. On the other hand, we find exciting causes of different kinds hurrying on similar events. At Naxos an outrage offered to the daughter of a wealthy farmer provoked the populace to rebel. At Mitylene we are told that the Penthilidæ were not overthrown until they exasperated the people by insulting processions. At Athens, and many other places, factions arose among the aristocracy, which drove the minority to league with the people.[71] In many of the northern states the nobles, after sanguinary conflicts, succeeded in effectually crushing all popular resistance. Of these, Thespiæ, Orchomenos, and Thebes, were the most remarkable. But in the greater part of the Grecian states popular right had triumphed over exclusive privilege at the close of the seventh century.

Want of a recognised authority.

The exclusiveness of territorial wealth and the irresponsibility of hereditary power were at an end; but the rights of industry and the security of commerce were not won. No class any longer had peculiar privileges of interference or exaction; but something more than this was indispensable. The few no longer arbitrarily ruled the many; but how were the many and the few to govern themselves?

[70] Herodotus, Book V. ch. 92.

[71] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 39, 296; and Hermann, chap. 3, § 61.

CHAP. I.

In quest of free and equal justice the many had undermined the strongholds of hereditary right; but how was this justice to be administered in accordance with their hopes of equal protection for the labour of the poor and the property of the rich, for him who toiled in the foundry or the field, and him whose possessions were undiminished, though certain of the political privileges once attached to them were gone? Order founded upon exclusive power had, in many of the Greek communities, crumbled by degrees away; in some, during stormy times, it had suddenly fallen in: and legal order founded upon the intelligent strength of the middle class was still a thing unknown. Yet order, and a stable public policy of some sort, was above all things needful, if industry and freedom were in companionship to grow up steadily in Greece. The need of fixed and recognised authority was the imperative want of the hour.

Æsymnetæ.

In some places the eloquent spokesman of discontent, in others the successful leader of revolt, stood before the people, claiming at once their gratitude and their confidence. Who so fit to be chief and ruler? Let him be *æsymnetes*—daysman between disputants,—the judge of right for all, and let his words be unto us for law:—so æsymnetæ were chosen. It is a remarkable circumstance in the history of Greece, that, about the same period of time, these every where obtained the supreme authority in Doric as well as in Ionic and Æolic cities; a proof that, although these com-

munities were derived from different races, the same stages in the progress of social life were every where (save at Argos and at Sparta) attended with the same phenomenon."[72] To these protectors of the common weal the supreme control and direction of affairs were intrusted. The resources of the state were placed at their disposal. They took the command in time of war, and exercised in time of peace the highest jurisdiction in all matters concerning property and life. The standing policy of the æsymnetæ was peace, although the necessities of their difficult, and often perilous position, drove them sometimes, it is true, into an opposite course. Their especial duty and function was not only to arbitrate between the individual oppressor and oppressed, but to moderate the rage of political factions, and—a still harder task—to curb the vexatious and mischievous abuse of subordinate power.

Their policy.

In the distinctive features of their policy we read unmistakeably the origin of their power, and the want it was created to supply. They were in an especial manner emanations from the industrial energy of the middle class; and their primary efforts were naturally directed, therefore, to secure it from domestic oppression and foreign injury,—to develope its intelligence,—and to open up new and beneficial sources for its occupation. Trade of many kinds was fostered; art was stimulated in the way that

[72] Muller, Dorians, Book I. ch. 8, § 1.

CHAP. I.

art loves best, by being set magnificent tasks to execute; labour of every description was variously and constantly employed. Cypselus had been the demagogue of the Corinthians, and was now their æsymnetes. His great aim seems to have been to discourage idleness, and to guide the industry of the people into useful channels. Public buildings, on a scale previously unattempted, were undertaken by him and completed; nor was their cost felt to be burdensome where the government was frugally conducted and the waste of war retrenched. Certain of the nobles disdained submitting to the new authority of the elected magistrates, and, emigrating to Sparta, Thebes, and other states of similar disposition, found undisguised sympathy and aid in plotting their overthrow. These attempts, or the apprehension of them, in several instances, led to war. But in the main the interest and inclination of the æsymnetæ alike prompted them to peaceful measures. They were emphatically the men of the middle class—the impersonations of their power—the expressions of their wants and will. And this class was essentially civic and commercial.

The personal charge of the chief magistrate was light, and no new taxes were added to the ordinary tolls and customs.[73] At Sicyon a like system was pursued. Myron's name was long preserved in Greek remembrance by the splendid edifices of his peaceful and brilliant administration. It is par-

[73] Muller, Dorians, Book I. ch. 8, § 3.

ticularly deserving of note, rather as a record of the advance of foreign traffic in his time than as any indication of extraordinary wealth, that in the public treasury, built by him at Olympia, were two chambers inlaid with Tartessian bronze, the weight of which, according to the usual votive inscription, was five hundred talents. One of these chambers was adorned with Doric, the other with Ionic columns.[74] Megara, likewise, was beautified under the æsymnetes, Theagenes, who, in many ways, cherished industry and the arts.[75]

Beneficial effects of their rule.

The vigour of their administration[76] and the progress which civilisation made under their sway[77] set at rest the notion, that the eventual failure of the æsymnetæ was the result of popular error in the original selections made, or arose from any peculiar obliquity of purpose in the individuals chosen. All things considered, it appears much more likely that they were as good men as could have been found; and that they discharged the perilous duties they undertook to fulfil as well, if not better, than most of their modern archetypes. Many a brawl, no doubt, was quelled, and many a dispute between weak and strong was equitably adjusted by their intervention. It was for this they had been raised up; and had they signally failed therein, they never could have ventured to assume the tone and bearing which

[74] Pausanias, Lib. VI. cap. 19, § 2.

[75] Thirlwall, Vol. I. ch. 10, p. 428.

[76] "For which reason Sparta, as the protector of aristocracy, overthrew them, wherever her power extended."—Muller, Dorians, Book III. ch. 1, § 5.

[77] Hermann, ch. 3, § 64.

CHAP. I.

ultimately rendered them so unpopular. It was not so much that they palpably and suddenly abused their office, as that their office imperceptibly corrupted them. They failed, not because they were worse men than their neighbours, but because they were not more than men; and they had been very much more had they held for an unlimited time unlimited power, and not become despotic.

Its incompatibility with freedom.

The error of the people lay in the supposition, that the office of æsymnetes, such as it was constituted, could co-exist permanently with public freedom. It was set up as a court of political equity; but equity, be it ever so incorrupt, is wholly inadequate to fill the place of law. In modern society, equity, contented with a function jealously defined and invested with no higher prerogative than that of arbitrating the differences of private life, serves an important use. It gleans the field of justice, and gathers up what general enactment has overlooked, that not even an individual right may be lost. But political equity—equity without law—equity at once an executive and a legislature in itself—is nothing less than tyranny in terms. Such, nevertheless, was the expedient which the inexperience of Greece resorted to.

Yet the attempt was most natural. Authority had heretofore been always exercised personally. The praise of Minos was, not that he had instituted excellent laws, but that he had excellently administered them. The oppressions under whose recent smart the people had risen in arms were all in-

flicted by bad or unpopular men. What so natural, then, as to confide in those for the due dispensation of justice who had triumphantly led them to resist its infraction? Popular appreciation of merit may have been distinct and accurate enough; but it was unreflecting, inexperienced, and utterly incapable of foresight or calculation. Victory was new to the many, and they abandoned themselves unsuspectingly to its enjoyment. They had yet to learn how hard it is to endure success, or apply its opportunities to good purpose. In exultant love with their leaders and themselves, they forgot how unfair it is to the best leaders to place them in unused temptation. It was necessary that they should be taught by an experience not likely to be soon forgotten, that with irresponsible authority no man can be permanently trusted. CHAP. I.

But few instances, like those of Pittacus at Mitylene and Phæbias at Samos,[78] are recorded where the æsymnetæ kept their trust. Creatures of the popular opinion, they did not at first deny their ultimate responsibility to the people; but the very nature of the duties they were chosen to perform rendered this illusory. They avowed themselves amenable to the entire people,—a crafty evasion, which flattered the vanity of the less influential citizens, but effectually baffled all attempts of the more far-sighted to exact any real account. The servant of the community imperceptibly became Æsymnetæ become tyranni.

[78] Thirlwall, Vol. I. ch. 10, p. 402.

CHAP. I.

their master; and thus, according to some, led back society in Greece to absolute monarchy. Far from it.[79] An æsymnetes, so long as he preserved the semblance of his original character, was the most perfect antithesis to the old heroic king. He held a delegated power from the people; his dignity was conferred for personal qualities, wholly irrespective of fortune or birth; Cypselus was sprung only by the mother's side from the aristocracy; and Orthagoras had been a cook. The term of office was seldom very accurately defined, but nowhere was it, perhaps, intended to be hereditary; by all it was probably regarded as an indispensable but temporary expedient, whose continuance must depend on circumstances. Yet not even where the primary objects of their elevation had been attained, and the daily exercise of power had worn away its popularity in the eyes of those who had called it with acclamation into being, were the real services of the æsymnetæ forgotten, or the old favourites of the people wantonly assailed. Nor was it until they had evinced their forgetfulness of the cause wherefore they had been raised up, and betrayed designs of converting their elective trust into a usurping dynasty, that symptoms of disappointment and aversion became apparent.[80] The once-loved appellation of æsymnetæ is heard no more; and, instead thereof, the ear grows accustomed to the more lasting epithet of *Tyranni*.

[79] Thirlwall, Vol. I. ch. 10, p. 421.

[80] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. V. cap. 8, § 20; Diodorus, Lib. XI. cap. 53.

CHAP. I.

Change of policy

Their whole policy was thenceforth changed. It was necessary now to dazzle the crowd with splendid spectacles, and to drown the murmurings of discontent in the alarm and noise of war. Personal daring and military skill were not wanting to second these aims; and victory covers a multitude of sins. But, in the intervals of peace, men had time to count the cost of glory, and to remind each other that not for this had the government been intrusted to these individuals. Additional, perhaps arbitrary, taxes were imposed,[81] and discontent grew rife; rumours of sedition spread, and the chief magistrate armed a number of his trusty followers. Has the tyrant, then, a guard? Suspicion begot hatred, mutual and inveterate. Fear is full of cruelty, and a despot has need to fear. "The good ruler," says Plutarch, "has, indeed, his apprehensions, but they are lest those intrusted to his care should suffer harm through him; the tyrant's fears are lest his subjects should injure him."[82] Thrasybulus of Miletus, and his friend Periander, were remembered with peculiar odium. But the history of particular struggles between coercion, triumphant for a time, only to be more thoroughly baffled in the end, and revolt learning at a hard school the way at last to overcome its thousand difficulties, belongs not to this place. For our purpose it is only necessary to

New taxes; body-guards.

[81] Muller, Dorians, Book I. ch. 8, § 3.

[82] Discourse to an Unlearned Prince, § 3.

CHAP. I.

observe, that we read of no instance in which the tyranny was transmitted to the third generation.[83] The Cypselidæ held power during seventy-three years; the Orthagoridæ ninety-nine: but, in most of the Grecian states east of the Adriatic, the tyranni were overthrown,[84] and the office they had rendered so unpopular was abolished before the beginning of the fifth century.

The tyranni overthrown.

The people had been taught a useful lesson of "liberty, in the lair of oppression," and would no longer confide unlimited power to the most obsequious courtier of their will. They saw that irresponsibility corrupts the heart even of the best of men; and the experience of the tyranni led them to the conviction, that any other supremacy than that of known and settled laws was incompatible with their safety and freedom.

[83] Hermann, ch. 3, § 65.

[84] Plutarch enumerates several who were deposed, De Malign. Herod. 21.

CHAPTER II.

HOW INDUSTRY AND FREEDOM TOGETHER GREW IN GREECE.

"The peculiarities that characterise different communities are mainly attributable to the diversity of their occupations. Some live by husbandry, some by manufactures, and the inhabitants of many isles and cities are almost wholly dependent on the sea. Their vessels are employed in fisheries or in warfare, in direct commerce or in the carrying trade; and there are those whose entire shipping is engaged in one pursuit; so that we hear only of the fishing-boats of Byzantium, the merchantmen of Chios, the lighters of Tenedos, and the triremes of Athens." [1]

DISAPPOINTED in the issue of their first attempt to obtain guarantees for freedom, the spirit of industry did not suffer the heart of the Greeks to fail. Industry itself stood every day in greater need of the benefits of order and law—every day more urgently demanded that means should be sought for attaining them.

Desire for legislation.

The choice of the people was now directed, not as formerly towards men to whom irresponsible authority should be confided, but towards such as by their wisdom might advise them, how irresponsible power in future could be rendered at once unneces-

[1] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. VI. cap. 1.

CHAP. II.

sary and impossible. The want of a determinate and recognised authority whereunto the aggrieved might fearlessly appeal, and whereby the accused might be fairly judged, and only when deservedly condemned, was felt more universally than ever. Let us have laws, then, which all men shall obey—public, equal, and imperative.

Law-less authority.

But the elements of a code as yet existed not.[2] Personal authority had hitherto been instead of law; and, save in so far as usage or circumstances modified its caprice, made its own mood the law. The word which subsequently came to signify law nowhere occurs in the Homeric writings, neither is there any allusion to legislation.[3] Usage, and custom, and oracular sanctions, were the only influences whereby the heroic governments were limited; and when the rich and noble took their place, the deficiency was not supplied. Law-*less* power might be generous or forbearing, and, doubtless, it frequently was both; but its good deeds were favours conferred, not rights acknowledged; and where a claim is unacknowledged and cannot be enforced, there is no right, no security, no law: and this had been the condition of mankind.

The poets.

Meanwhile in mythic song was cradled the claim of justice betwixt man and man. Poetry was the inspired plaint of suffering and endurance, the utterance of a heart full of longing and of hope,

[2] Unless the somewhat apocryphal institutions of Lycurgus be deemed an exception. It seems more than doubtful, however, whether Sparta owed any great number of her laws, such as they were, to the wisdom of any individual.—Muller, Dorians.

[3] Thirlwall, chap. 6.

declaring the necessity of a rein being put upon the wild neck of power, and the good of one. But poetry did more than cradle justice in its infancy and record its feeble cries. Unsuspected and unforbidden, it led forth its early steps and shewed it to the people. Whatever was righteous in old customs poetry extolled; whatever was repugnant to its clear sense of right, it rebuked and stigmatised. Thus was usage made a stem for after-times to graft upon, and its root was set in the memory of the people. The poet uttered, in the purity and immortal vigour of symbol and abstraction, that which he had heard or witnessed around him. Traditional truth, sublimed in the dark chambers of his imagery, came forth with concentrated warmth and life, and so long as the national memory remained it could not die. Tyrtæus,[4] Callinus, Homer, Mimnermus, Actæus, and, in this respect, above all, Hesiod[5]—were, in a certain sense, the lawgivers, or shall we say law-founders, of the twilight time. As day broke, the sages, men of a different stamp and with a different function, but full of poetry in their hearts, arose: Thales, the spokesman of the Ionic league; Bias, who urged migration to Sardinia to escape from Persian thraldom; Heraclitus of Ephesus; and Epemenides of Crete; and, somewhat later, Pythagoras and Chilon. To these likewise should be added Zaleucas and Charondas. Their laws were probably more a collection

The sages.

[4] Hermann, ch. 2, § 31.

[5] Cleomenes the Spartan used to speak of Hesiod as "the helots' poet."

CHAP. II.

of maxims, partly original and partly traditionary, than regular constitutions.[6] The principal sanction of these primitive codes was derived from the assertion of their promulgators, that special revelations had been made to them from on high; and as the natural inference, they sedulously prescribed that their suggestions, if adopted, should be immutable. Minos, indeed, was favoured, every ninth year, with an interview by Zeus, and thereby was enabled to revise and amend his work. But the rest were less fortunate; and the lack of sound political philosophy which their intolerant proscriptions of all change or improvement bespeak, compels us to distinguish them as a class from the illustrious men who succeeded them. It was necessary, however, that there should be this "transition stage"[7] between oracles and written laws.

Practical lawgivers.

Far different were the ideas and the aim of those who are worthy of our regard as the real lawgivers of Greece,—Solon of Athens, Dæmonax of Cyrene, Cleobulus of Lindus, Pheidon of Cuma, and the many others who were the practical guides of the noon.[8] They, too, sought to interweave the deepest principles of religion with the entire frame of their policy; but they relied rather upon the worth of the religious feeling, practically applied to

[6] Those attributed to Charondas were sung as scholia upon public occasions.—Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 40.

[7] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 40.

[8] The code of Mantinea belongs to a more advanced period. It was ascribed to Nicodromus, the friend and pupil of Diagoras the Melian, and could hardly date earlier therefore than the year 415 B.C.

every duty and relation of life, than to any astounding fable. They declared all men to be morally accountable; they made fidelity to country and to freedom sacred duties; and they trusted to the effect of the early inculcation of such principles on the multitude, not to the pretence of superhuman wisdom in themselves. They saw that change must come in the natural and rightful order of things; they knew that society had changed, was changing, and must continue still to change; they felt that to enjoin caution and deliberation was their duty; but they believed that to decree immutability of laws was equally vain and wrong. They counselled adherence to the great and unerring principles of government, which are comparatively few,—not tenacity of minute details, which are infinitely various. They urged upon their countrymen the necessity of keeping the great end of government steadily in view, not intolerance regarding the difference of paths whereby it may be reached.

Diversity of codes.

Instead, therefore, of any one arbitrary system, we behold a vast diversity of popular forms arise. The local circumstances out of which they sprung demanded various institutions; and instead of marvelling at their diversity, a true insight into their common end and object will lead us to perceive in that very diversity the best evidence of their worth. A touching proof of the previous want of popular self-reliance is discoverable in the credulity with which the fiction was received and long adhered to, that the codes which Solon and Cleobulus promul-

CHAP. II.

gated on their return from travel were patchworks of foreign institutions. What flint-sparks of suggestion the comparison of various systems in Africa and Asia may have elicited we know not. But the Greek codes were essentially Greek, designed to supply peculiar wants by peculiar means; nay, we may be thoroughly sure that indigenous opinion was the quarry whereout their foundation-stones were hewn; and that upon these, and not on any broken bricks of Egypt or Phœnicia, were reared, by native genius, those varied constitutional homes wherein Greek industry and freedom loved so long to dwell.

The census.

Some important features seem to have been possessed by most of them in common. Every where we hear of a public census, in some places only of the wealthier middle classes, as at Ephesus; in others, comprising a larger class, as at Megara; or finally, like that of Athens, where various degrees of political power were accorded to different classes discriminated on the burgess-roll by the respective amount of their incomes. But all tended alike to the expression of the universal idea, that property had become the substantial ground of distinction between the political condition of the many and the few.[9] Unhappily for us no chronicles remain at once complete and faithworthy of these early edifices. Broken relics, scattered here and there, overgrown with the gossip of a garrulous age, as in Plutarch and Pausanias,—or with the original corners rounded off, and built up in the dead wall

[9] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 31.

of didactic philosophy by Plato and Aristotle,— or half-hidden and tarnish-painted by the inveterate party spirit of Xenophon and Isocrates; these are the materials out of which modern research has to endeavour to re-build in somewhat of their primary design and form the varied constitutions of Greece. Without such beacon-lights as Herodotus and Thucydides the task were altogether hopeless; even with their aid it is often unsatisfactory. Some brief notices of the industry of the leading states, in connexion with their policy, must here suffice.

As the lava of conquest began to cool, and to split into unconnected masses, between each rift the indigenous popular industry sprang up, and gradually sheathed many of the rugged forms into which the Hellenic flood had congealed with a Pelasgic verdure. Thus in Samos, where from an age exceedingly remote many descriptions of useful labour had been carried on, the ancient spirit of inventive toil revived.[10] There, we are told, did Rhæcus and Theodorus, in the seventh century B.C., perform the curious feat of moulding shapes in clay; which Debutades, an artificer of Sicyon, having improved upon, found that he could render applicable in the way of ornaments for the roofs of houses, and even for embellishing the summits of temples. These figures were sometimes stained with various dyes— madder being particularly mentioned among the colouring stuffs employed. It was discovered also,

Samian wares.

[10] See Pausanias, Lib. VII. cap. 4.

CHAP. II.

by experiment, that certain kinds of clay were suitable to particular purposes; and the valuable art being once applied to ordinary uses, it gradually became to the Samiotes a permanent and extensive source of profitable occupation: vast quantities of earthenware being annually exported to distant countries, as well as to the other states of Greece. They had several rivals among their neighbours, more especially at Corinth, whence we are told that Eucheir and Eugrammus, two skilful potters, emigrated to Etruria, and so introduced the knowledge of their art among that tasteful people.[11] In the isle of Cos, likewise, a description of porcelain, exceedingly thin and fair, was manufactured; exquisite vessels, shaped on the wheel, were fabricated at Erythræ; and Sicyon claimed the pre-eminence in works of alabaster. All these emulously laboured to maintain each their own repute for some peculiar excellence of composition or design; and the proof that no monopolising discouragement ever fell upon their free and honourable competition is unconsciously afforded by Pliny, when he states that in his late time each of their productions was so highly valued, that it paid the merchants to import them into Italy, and even to more distant countries, where the same manufacture was carried on, but in somewhat less perfection.[12] Can any one in the least degree conversant with the history of such inventions entertain a doubt that to this free competition of

Competition.

[11] Pliny, Hist. Nat. Lib. XXXV. cap. 12.

[12] Ibid.

successive ages was attributable the perfection of skill and fertility of design which, even in the fragments that have escaped the wreck of classic civilisation, fill us with delight and admiration? Imbued with the traditionary taste and skill on which success in any art, but more peculiarly in that of design, necessarily depends, the Samiotes applied themselves, moreover, to manufactures of gold and silver. In these they soon attained celebrity. Traffic with Asia, if it had not as yet rendered the precious metals very abundant, supplied at least sufficient materials to those who made vessels of ornament, or for sacred uses. Among the articles most highly prized in the palace of the Persian king was a cup wrought by the Samian Theodorus; and numerous shrines in Greece contained specimens of his highly valued workmanship.

Exports of Samos.

They also freighted many ships with fruit and corn, besides the curious produce of their handicraft. The first distant voyage of the Greeks is ascribed to Colæus, one of their merchants.[13] And so firmly did the far-sighted and enterprising spirit of a free commercial community take root amongst them, that, notwithstanding many difficulties arising from their political locality, as peculiarly exposed to Persian exactions, and despite the occasional evils of domestic misrule, we find them undertaking public works of a magnitude almost incredible, if due regard be had to the period of their completion and the limited resources of those who planned and

[13] Herodotus, Lib. IV. cap. 152.

CHAP. II.

executed them. Of these the most remarkable were, — a mole for the protection of their harbour, and an aqueduct, tunnelled through a mountain near the city, by which the inhabitants were supplied with water from a fountain distant seven furlongs.[14] The remains of these admirable trophies of their skill were visible even in modern times.[15]

Political condition.

Notwithstanding their intelligence and perseverance, the Samiotes seem to have been frequently unfortunate in the working of their political system. But while their yearnings after freedom were not destined to be fully satisfied, their fortitude sustained them under many vicissitudes, and they found in arts and manufactures a solace for their disappointments. On one occasion certain of them being discontented with the state of public affairs emigrated to a little isle called Siphnos, in the Ægæan Sea, and there abode.[16] They had not long been there, until they discovered the curious properties of a stone very abundant in the isle, which, when first dug up, was soft and easily turned on the wheel, and then grew so hard when exposed to the air as to be fire-proof.[17] An extensive manufacture of this singular stone sprang up. Vessels made of it were found particularly useful for culinary purposes; and for many centuries Siphnian ware was exported to various markets.[18]

[14] Herodotus, Lib. III. cap. 60.
[15] Tournefort, Chap. XVII.
[16] Herodotus, Lib. III. cap. 57.
[17] Theophrastus, Lib. LXXIV. cap. 2.
[18] Pliny, Hist. Nat. Lib. XXXV. cap. 12.

CHAP. II. Chios.

Almost every thing recorded of Chios, with its orderly, frugal, and enterprising inhabitants, is highly interesting. A generous soil and healthful climate did not seem to these good islanders sufficient pretexts for sloth; nor did the narrow limits of their insular inheritance appear an adequate excuse for morbid pinings that they were not born where others were. They worked as though they thought their island good enough for them, and they for it, until its hills bore fruit a hundredfold, and they grew rich and strong. They early tasted the sweets of liberty, and were full of enterprise, and its rewards. Their soil was profitably and minutely cultivated, and their traffic with both continents reared such a marine, that when the common safety was menaced the Chians were able to furnish one hundred ships to the combined fleet, each having on board four hundred men.[19] The tone of their commercial policy is indicated by the fact that, alone of all the early communities, they instituted a public registry of debts,[20] no mean proof of their sagacity and civilisation.

Their bravery of spirit is recorded likewise; and the honourable memorial is preserved that, among all the island states, they endured the most; not only by reason of the efforts they made to resist the common foe of the national liberty, but because, when overpowered by superior numbers, they dis-

[19] Böckh, Public Economy of Athens, Book IV. § 6.

[20] Herodotus, Lib. IV. cap. 152.

CHAP. II.

dained to yield. When some of their allies panic-stricken fled, the Chians scorned to imitate their example. In concert with the few confederates that remained firm they broke the Persian line again and again, nor did they retire to their own havens until many of their ships were lost, and they had captured several of the enemy's.[21]

Phocæa.

The repute of the Phocæans has not descended to us quite so untarnished, probably because they were unfortunate. They desired to avail themselves of the discovery, learned in all likelihood from some of the Phœnician sailors, that there lay beyond the sea, near where the sun went down, a land exceeding rich in silver, gold, and other metals, which the artless owners were willing to exchange upon easy terms for some of the wares which Greek inventiveness had begun to fabricate. Adopting vessels of fifty oars instead of the round shallops which had sufficed for their coasting trade near home, they made their way to Spain, not without occasional fracas on their route, for such was the manner of the time. Who sought to hinder them, or whom they sought to interfere with, we know not. They and the Phœnicians often were at feud with one another; but whether arising from commercial quarrels or political causes must remain conjectural. The latter seems more probable. The opulent traders of Tripolis and Sydon could hardly have been jealous of the few Phocæan barks

[21] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 15.

that from time to time essayed the long and perilous voyage to Tartessus; and it is distinctly recorded that the Greeks met with naught but friendship there. The chief magistrate of that Phœnician commonwealth, Arganthonius, gave them permission to form a settlement wheresoever they would, and established intimate relations with them.[22] There are many traces of an intimate mercantile connexion between the Greek and Phœnician people. Tyre got unwrought iron from the merchants of Carthage, but polished iron from those of Greece.[23] We likewise know that it was by Phœnician hands the Greek mines were first opened and worked;[24] and, in later times, it was through their means that Greece was supplied with tin, which became an article of very extensive use.

Phocæan emigration.

The Phocæans seem to have prospered in common with their Ionic neighbours, especially during the sixth century. We hear memorable mention made of their richly adorned temples and the imposing strength of their walls. These, it is said, their friends at Tartessus presented them with the means of building, as a token of friendship and esteem. Wearied, at last, by the exactions of the despots of Asia, they refused further concessions, and resolved to abide the result. Their city was besieged, and, finding resistance vain, they took advantage of an

[22] Herodotus, Lib. I. cap. 163.
[23] Jerome, translation of Ezekiel, I. 37.
[24] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 47.

CHAP. II.

armistice to embark, with their families and all their movable effects, on board their faithful galleys, thinking it preferable to forsake old home and seek freedom in strange lands, than endure the exhausting and insatiable rapacity of arbitrary exaction.[25]

The Chians refuse to sell themthe Œnusiæ.

Their course was first turned towards Chios, for they wished to purchase certain islets called Œnusiæ that lay near its harbour. But the Chians were unwilling to accept the price they offered, fearing a new centre of commerce might be created too near their own. The contrast would seem almost to have been designed by the great historian, between the generous behaviour of the Tartessians, upon whom the luckless men of Phocæa had no national claim, and their grudging kinsmen of Chios. Yet their subsequent adventures render us more than suspicious that we know not the whole story, and that a knowledge of their habits and character would vindicate the otherwise unimpeached reputation of the Chians from the charge of inhospitality or cruelty in refusing to alienate, in the manner which had been proposed, an intrinsically valueless, but relatively important, part of their limited territory.[26]

In Corsica.

Steering for Corsica, where, in all likelihood, they had previously had mercantile connexions, they were favourably received and permitted to form a settlement. But, growing strong, they commenced

[25] Herodotus, Lib. I. cap. 164; cap. 163, 164.

[26] Ibid. Lib. I. cap. 165, 166.

a series of encroachments on the Etrurian and Punic colonies in the island, and finally provoked so exemplary a chastisement from those powerful neighbours, that they were fain to migrate once again. Some of them went to Rhegium; some are said to have entered the Tiber and formed some friendly relations with the Romans;[27] others sailed towards the mouths of the Rhone; and to these is generally ascribed the great extension of Marseilles,[28] if not its first foundation.[29]

Miletus.

"Miletus was at one time the glory of Ionia."[30] The Neleidæ, among the oldest of the Greek noblesse, had very early adopted commerce as a pursuit. They soon afterwards "deemed it expedient to yield many political privileges of importance to the impetuous efforts of the demos."[31] Their power seems to have consequently continued long predominant, though party conflicts were for many generations carried on under the celebrated watchwords of the *Aeinautæ*[32] and *Cheiromacha*.[33] These graphic epithets owed their origin, the first to the suspicion of the working classes, who were led to imagine that their commercial aristocracy were ever plotting

[27] Justin, Lib. XLIII. cap. 3.

[28] Hermann, Polit. Antiq. § 78, n. 28.

[29] Strabo, IV. 270.

[30] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 28.

[31] Wachsmuth, Vol. II. §§ 31, 35.

[32] "Αειναυται, qu. d. semper-nautæ, magistratus quidam apud Milesios, Hes. Plut. (Quæst. Gr. 193), ait apud Milesios ita vocatos fuisse quosdam e potentioribus qui conscensis navibus consilia de maximis rebus agitabant procul a terra deinde cum ratam habuissent aliquam sententiam, revertebantur."—Steph. Thes. Tom. IV. p. 6303.

[33] "Χειρομαχα,—manibus pugnans. Apud Milesios sodalitates duas fuisse, quarum una appellata sit χειρομαχα," &c.—Ibid. Tom. VII. p. 10,475.

CHAP. II.

to obtain a sinister control and mastery over them. These conspiracies they believed were generally entered into at sea or in some foreign port, whence the reproachful epithet, which signified "ever from home and on no good errand." The populace, on the other hand, being without arms, which were every where regarded as an honourable distinction, were contemptuously called "the fistycuff fellows." Their contention, at one time, reached such a height, that the men of Paros, whose judgment was deemed the wisest in all Greece, were called in to arbitrate their differences; and through their friendly intervention harmony was restored.[34]

The Ionic League.

These, with certain other city-states, of which Colophon and Ephesus were the most remarkable, constituted the original Ionic league.[35] Their institutions, like their circumstances and their dialects, differed widely. Colophon, which was celebrated for its early skill in the smelting of all kinds of metals,[36] adopted the forms of timocracy or popular government, based on a property qualification.[37] But a common spirit of enterprise and love of independence pervaded all. Other states in course of time, seeing the benefits of such a confederation, sought admission within its circle, and were permitted to send their representatives to the assembly of the league, which at appointed times met in the temple

[34] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 29.

[35] The original members were Samos, Chios, Phocæa, Ephesus, Erythræ, Lebedus, Clazomenæ, Teos, Miletus, Colophon, Myus, and Priene.

[36] Strabo, Lib. IX. p. 613.

[37] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 35, 37.

of Poseidon at Mycale, to consult for the allied weal, and to celebrate the festival of the Panionia.[38] CHAP. II.

Inland States.

It has been conjectured, not without reason, that originally the soil of Peloponnesus, and of other parts of Hellas, was almost barren; and that much of the prolific pasturage and arable land of subsequent times was the result of reclamation. When the Persian asked a deserter to his camp whether he thought the Greeks would venture to resist his overbearing mandates, he answered, "If I am to speak the truth rather than what would be agreeable, I must say I am convinced they will; for their nationality has been reared amid privations; and it is by their fortitude, and the healthful wisdom of their laws that they have risen above the evils of poverty and misrule."[39] And the noble boast of a later generation was that "from their forefathers they had learned to attain eminence by labour."[40]

Arcadia.

Arcadia, which depended chiefly upon agriculture, was under all circumstances devoted to the principles of local and lenient rule. When the princely governments fell, the country appears to have divided itself into a great number of independent townships. These finding the need of political union, re-associated themselves together, under certain federal forms, for general defence. In addition to these, there grew up amongst them many mutual ties of a domestic kind. Mantinea was the centre of five townships; Tegra of nine; Orchomenos was

[38] Herodotus, Lib. I. cap. 143.
[39] Ibid. Lib. VII. cap. 102.
[40] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 123.

CHAP. II.

of a lesser number; but each maintained its individuality and freedom; and all were characterised by popular institutions. At Mantinea the people elected a certain number of citizens, by whom the magistrates and judges were elected.[41] That socially the Arcadians were an industrious population is indicated by the circumstance of there being no vestige of a servile class in the country, which is the more remarkable from its proximity to Lacedæmon. Even the existence of *periœci* cannot be traced with certainty; and in all the struggles for national rights that chequer Grecian story, the Arcadian states are are either found active on the side of freedom, or held back involuntarily.[42]

Achaia.

Similarly inclined, but more tardy in their social and political developement, were the Achaians. But they loved equity and peace, and seem to have escaped many of those internal struggles wherein the other tribes were schooled in a knowledge of their rights. Their sense of justice and adherence to their own system of well-distributed rule rendered their institutions a very model of good government to the latest period;[43] but as were their trials, so also were their services and glories less than many of their brethren.

Bœotia.

There were some states where the Doric spirit long survived in all its anti-progressive and anti-commercial rigour. Besides Lacedæmon, which

[41] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 38.
[42] Pausanias, Lib. VIII. cap. 6.
[43] Polybius, Lib. II. cap. 5.

merits separate notice, Thebes, the metropolis of the Bœotian towns, clung tenaciously to the ancient ways of Hellenism. No one was eligible to any public trust or station there who during the ten preceding years had been in any way connected with mercantile pursuits.[44] The commentary of the annalist on such a policy is briefly told. When the Eastern invader came, Thebes was his ally.[45] When genius arose within her own confines, and momentarily signalised her name, premature death put out the transient light, and monopolised Bœotia reverted to her stagnant gloom. Her existence in Greece during seven hundred years was regarded almost as a fact without meaning; and for the world, what is her memory?

Epidamnus.

Epidamnus, too, retained the contempt for industrial pursuits which her Doric founders had on system sown.[46] So late as the eve of the Peloponnesian war, no inflection of her early institutions had taken place. A casual dispute, concerning the intermarriage of a noble with one of plebeian rank, kindled a revolt against the dominant class, who were driven out of the city for a time. Ultimately they appear to have regained, by foreign aid, their ancient ascendancy; and how little the sanguinary struggles through which they had passed tended to modify the social repugnance to industry, is bespoken in the passing note of Aristotle, that in his time the

[44] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. III. cap. 4, § 4.

[45] Thucydides, Lib. III. cap. 62.

[46] Ibid. Lib. I. cap. 24.

CHAP. II.

periœci, or unenfranchised working classes, were still very numerous there; and that "no citizen was permitted to engage in any craft or business,"[47]—a system of which he does not conceal his own admiration. But history asks, what did Epidamnus do, create, improve, exemplify, or contribute to the common stock of Grecian fame?

Elis.

Elis was one of the earliest, if not the first state in Greece that adopted the principle of what was termed *synoikismos*, or enfranchisement of the country towns' people.[48] Had we been merely told that at the recommendation of Oxylus, their lawgiver, who forbade the mortgaging of landed property,[49] the Eleans had consented thus to extend their rights of citizenship to a given number of persons, we might ascribe the concession to some pressing necessity, such as that which obliged Argos to do likewise. But the growth of liberty in Elis seems rather to have been steadily expansive. The soil yielded coal, useful in smelting iron, and the stithies were busy there. Was this, then, the secret of the early acquisition of rights by the smaller towns? History is silent on the matter; but we are able to discern the gradual developement of her system, visible in the successive changes that subverted, first, the exclusive privileges of birth,—then those of wealth,—afterwards those of the irresponsible magistracy; and which finally conferred upon the population of the

[47] Polit. Lib. V. cap. 3, § 4.
[48] Diodorus Siculus, Lib. XI. cap. 54.
[49] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. II. cap. 6, § 5.

country districts the right of being judged in their own localities, instead of the city; and compelled the judges to hold, for that purpose, at stated intervals, regular courts of assize.[50] CHAP. II. About 471 B.C.

In Argolis a greater blending of institutions seems to have taken place upon the overthrow of the tyranni. Chief magistrates, called *Artynæ*, presided over an elective gerusia, limited to eighty members. We hear somewhat later of a legislative body to which the name of bule is attached; but whether it superseded or co-existed with "the Eighty" is doubtful. Its popular constitution, however, is certain, and the victory of Cleomenes, in 524 B.C., depriving Argos of the flower of her nobly-born citizens, she adopted the wise resolution of enfranchising the country towns' people, and of thus refounding the state upon the principle of the industrious classes being allowed their just share in the government.[51] From that period her progress was rapid in wealth, arts, and population.[52] As the upper ranks regained their strength, a contest for their ancient supremacy arose; and, to end the struggle, a considerable number of the people withdrew to Tyrius, which they ruled in peace. The government of Argos ever after bore the impress of the change it had undergone; and, with few interruptions, she reaped the benefit it was calculated to produce. Yet the domineering spirit of Argive States.

[50] Theophrastus, XXVIII.

[51] Polybius, Lib. IV. cap. 73, 78.

[52] Hobbes's Translation of Thucydides (edition 1843), Vol. II. p. 32, n. 21.

CHAP. II.

Agamemnon haunted the halls of Argos, and throughout her changes she claimed an arrogant pre-eminence over all the Argolic towns. Under Pheidon her ascendancy, which had been wrested from her by Lacedæmon, was for a time restored. The sanguinary fate which had revolutionised her domestic system was the signal of emancipation to her subject cities. Acte, Sicyon, Halicis, Phlius, Træzen, Hermione, and Epidaurus, severally "asserted their independence before the time of the Persian wars."[53] At Epidaurus, where the gerusia had been limited to 180 members, it was found expedient to confer upon their "dusty-footed" subjects a certain participation in political power. The unfortunate desire which, under modified institutions, Argos never lost of regaining her metropolitan supremacy, taught the minor towns to look distrustfully on the principles she professed, and to seek for sympathy and alliance with her foes. But it does not appear that they ever copied the Spartan principles of internal rule.[54] Ægina, which had been colonised from Epidaurus, had long been subject to the mother town, in so far as that all disputes between Æginetans and Epidaurians were determined in the courts of the latter. When the commerce of Ægina spread and their merchants began to be considered the most opulent in Greece, they resolved to have a navy as well as a currency of their own,[55] for they "felt that they were strong

Ægina.

[53] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 26.
[54] Ibid. Vol. I. § 60.
[55] Böckh, Public Economy of Athens, Vol. I. § 4.

enough to govern themselves."[56] Their institutions permanently remained timocratic, notwithstanding many attempts that were made to change them. We may not widely err, perhaps, if we ascribe part of the political disposition of the Æginetans to the commercial rivalry that existed between their island state and Athens. In the course of their frequent quarrels both the Argives and Æginetans prohibited Attic wares and merchandise from entering their territories; but such proceeding seeming to need some unusual excuse, they feigned certain religious motives. There is no reason to suppose, however, that these interdicts were very long maintained.[57]

Eubœa. Eubœa was governed by the ancient families who adopted the common name of "the Hippobotæ" until the middle of the sixth century B.C., when, having provoked the hostility of the Athenians, they were signally defeated, and a great number of them led into captivity. The victors granted them their freedom on payment of the usual ransom; but a portion of the chain wherewith each of them had been bound was hung up as a memorial in the citadel, and their lordly demesnes were divided into four thousand farms, on some of which Attic colonists were planted.[58]

Origin of the system of Consul. One of the best consequences of the growing spirit of trade among the Greeks was the habit of interchanging courtesies and services between the

[56] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 83.
[57] Ibid. Lib. V. cap. 88.
[58] Ibid. Lib. V. cap. 77.

CHAP. II.

many separate communities. To be free and prosperous depended on the institutions of each, or rather upon their suitability to the wants and their coincidence with the feelings of each community. Its permanent security against the superior might of external foes necessarily depended often on the strength of the confederacy—whether Ionic, Argive, or Hexapolitan—to which it was attached. But civilisation required something more—something which neither the exclusive pride of municipal freedom, nor the compressive fear of foreign aggression that inspired federal associations, could bestow. Without public law, national greatness, founded in national honour, and national unity, and national sentiment, could have never been. The steps whereby the Greeks, with all their intense love of localism, were instinctively led to the gradual adoption of a system so essential to the ultimate developement of their civilisation is well deserving of consideration.

Need of consuls.

When traffic brought the members of one community into frequent contact with those of another, occasions must have been constantly arising where one party found themselves for the time being very dependent on the good faith of the other. Did a Corinthian ship, laden with metal castings, anchor in the port of Byzantium, and discharge her cargo on the faith of receiving a return freight of corn or wool, it was manifestly in the power of the Byzantines, in a variety of ways, to take advantage of the casual visitors, and, if so inclined, to weary or

coerce them into such terms of charges, tolls, payments, and exactions, as strangers far from home are, even under the most perfect systems of trade, frequently exposed to. What redress? They depart, vowing a recital of their wrongs at home, and vengeance for such ill-usage. And their tale provokes mercantile sympathy enough; and there are loud calls on Corinthian rulers to arm "and demand satisfaction, or exact compensation for so manifest an injury!" But Corinthian rulers only mutter vague assurances and general hopes of being able to obtain redress till the ferment dies away; prudent rulers,—clear about nothing in the entire business, save that they would be mad to hazard a war on any such occasion. Better, on the whole, to look on at the alleged grievance than adopt the infinite responsibility of individual quarrels, of which there must, of course, be two sides, and to a clear understanding of which they could never hope to come. What redress, then, were injustice really suffered? Without a system of public law there could practically be none. Commerce would silently have shrunk from a repetition of such risks, or possibly have fallen more and more into the habit of going armed, under the fair pretence of self-protection; with what results it is not difficult to conjecture.

Want of redress for commercial injuries.

But the instincts of industry are wise and inventive, and seldom, when left free to act, fail of discovering the right way of attaining rightful ends. It happened, in all likelihood, that one of a com-

Instincts of industry.

CHAP. II.

munity, whose traders frequently visited a neighbouring port, took up his residence there, and, gaining thereby local knowledge of men and things, became capable of rendering many services to his old friends when they periodically came. Would they not gladly seek his advice and guardianship, and reward him for the trouble he took in their affairs? Manifestly a person in such a position, and stimulated by permanent self-interest, had means of rendering his fellow-citizens valuable services; and the example once set could not fail of being imitated.

Appointment of consuls.

Then the feeling of the state interposed. Its equity forbade the continuance of any system which emanated not from its authority. There were obviously practical reasons, too, why a protection which had grown indispensable should be made a claimable right for every citizen in a foreign port, and not the mere purchaseable favour of an individual. Imperceptibly we find the "agent of the merchants" becoming the *proxenus*, or consul of the state,—an officer holding the delegated powers of his commonwealth; inviolable as its herald, responsible for the safety of its citizens, bound on all occasions to inquire, when called upon, into injury inflicted, and charged with the duty of demanding reparation in the name of his state for any improper loss sustained.

This was, indeed, a stride in civilisation.[59] Not

[59] The rights of epigamia, ateleia, and isopolitica, which are usually associated with those of proxenia, appear to have sprung from political rather than industrial motives, and to belong chiefly to a later period.

merely was a distant government enabled now to interpose its expostulations or menaces with effect, but habits of dealing were engendered that made these less necessary. The consular system rendered easy and inevitable the authoritative exposure of injustice, violence, or bad faith, on the part of any offending state (or state that screened offenders); and it became an ordinary threat, in after times, that a perfidious city should be "denounced to all the Greeks." By degrees the system of consuls became universal. Even towns, between whom no mercantile intercourse can be traced, mutually appointed proxeni; we hear of a consul for Heraclea (on the Pontus), at the remote and, as far as we know, unconnected city of Argos,[60] and other instances occur in like manner.

Early trade of Corinth.

Of all the early dwellings of Greek trade Corinth was, perhaps, the most notable. In the ancient chronicle of Eumelus, the mythic genealogy of its founder is traced to a daughter of the Ocean. The imagination of the Greeks personified not only every mental quality and natural element under the characters of deity, but attributed likewise the origin of every state and town to some ideal personage. And as the poetic garlands are untwined from the symbol-wands of tradition, the hidden truths of history appear. Thus there was at Corinth a temple to the Dæmon of Violence, which no one was allowed to enter; and, among the

[60] Böckh, Book I. § 9.

CHAP. II.

allegoric statues that had survived to Pausanias' time, was one of Order, another of the Sea, with many more emblematic of the industrial feeling which predominated among the Corinthians uninterruptedly for many hundred years.[61]

The first triremes.

Soon after the expedition to Troy, their commerce wears an aspect of importance; and they deemed it worth their while to fit out cruisers who should convoy their ships of merchandise, and chastise the buccaneers that infested the Ægæan sea. They began, moreover, to build large vessels. The first triremes that the Greeks possessed were theirs,[62] which Aminocles, a skilful shipwright, built them; and so little of a grudging or engrossing policy oppressed the rising energies of invention then, that we are told, without comment or any apparent consciousness of peculiar liberality, that the Corinthians suffered him to build at Samos four of these new and powerful vessels for the people of that rival state.[63] Indications of such a spirit are the more interesting, inasmuch as there is good ground for believing that Corinth was the first city of Greece that regularly took to trade. Even by Homer the Corinthians are called the wealthy.[64] Probably their earlier essays were in the carrying trade, for which their situation fitted them. Till art and manufactures in metal grew into importance they could have had little to export; but they were

About 700 B.C.

[61] Pausanias, Lib. II. cap. 1, § 4.

[62] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 13.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ἀφνειὸν τε Κορινθον.—Iliad, II. 570.

able to land goods at one side of the Isthmus, and to re-ship them at the other; this was extensively done, and the tedious, and often hazardous, coasting round the stormy headlands of Peloponnesus thereby saved.[65] A transit-duty or toll was levied by the Corinthians upon all goods borne through their territory; but we hear no complaint of its amount being exorbitant, and the uninterrupted continuance of the practice during many centuries would of itself go far to refute the supposition.

Political system.

The institutions of Corinth seem to have been founded upon a property franchise. The old nobility retained at all times great influence; the more so because they wisely adapted themselves to the leading idea of the state, instead of vainly arraying their hereditary privileges against it. That idea was the pursuit of gain, whether for its own sake, or as the means of compassing those enjoyments, whether of refined taste or luxury, to which money made by industry is, for a community, the only unfailing key. This ruling impulse, while it tended to foster useful habits among the aristocracy, naturally moulded the laws into the form of a liberal timocracy, under which the majority lived in comparative content, too busy making and spending their money, to find time for those passionate controversies of a political nature to which so many of their neighbours were addicted.

Foreign policy.

Generally speaking the foreign policy of Corinth was wise and just. Amid the ever-shifting relations

[65] Herodotus, Lib. VII. cap. 24; Polybius, Lib. IV. cap. 10; Thucydides, Lib. VIII. cap. 1; Strabo, Lib. VIII. p. 380.

CHAP. II.

of her restless and impetuous associates, perfect neutrality was frequently impossible. But it is the true praise of the Corinthians, that no important war originated with them; that they forbore in the main from aggressions on the weak, or vain rivalry with the strong; that, with rare exceptions, they were found ranged on the side opposed to political monopoly, whether Spartan or Athenian; that they adhered to their engagements faithfully; and that when forced at length into the fray, they shrank from no peril and deserted no friend. In the worst of times they steadily abided by the principle, that the national independence could only be maintained by the essential severalty of the states.

Corinth the opponent of Spartan ascendancy.

In concert with the Lacedæmonians they had helped the Athenians to get rid of their tyranni. No sooner, however, did the good effects of legal liberty become apparent, than the jealousy of the Spartans revived. "They saw the people of Athens thrive and grow strong; they knew that they were little disposed to submit meekly to them; they perceived that the Athenians, who had been so weak and tractable under their influence, while subject to domestic oppression, bid fair to become, under free

B.C. 509.

institutions, their equals and competitors."[66] Instantly their policy was changed; they opened intrigues with the exiled family of Pisistratus; and consulted with the representatives of the surrounding states how they might compass a counter-revolution.[67] Few

[66] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 91. [67] Ibid.

of these appear to have shewn any disposition to promote the views of Sparta; but fewer still cared, probably, to cross her malignant purpose. Corinth alone stood boldly for the liberty of her menaced rival. Her heart was sound; and she scorned alike to fear the industrial competition of one neighbour, or the political resentment of another. Through the lips of Sosicles, her envoy on the occasion, the dastardly motive of Lacedæmon was generously rebuked, and the national impolicy of resuscitating a mischievous and, as experience had proved, a contagious system of misrule, was manfully maintained. The other allies, taking courage at the boldness of the Corinthians, supported their remonstrance; and the conspiracy for re-imposing absolutism on Athens was abandoned in despair.[68] When in after times, however, Athens in her turn took to domineering over the confederate states of Greece, Corinth was the foremost and most eloquent in denouncing her usurpation.

Policy of non-intervention.

At another time, when the Athenians asked the loan of armed vessels, in order to carry on their struggle with Ægina, the conduct of the Corinthians indicated how strong was their desire to avoid being drawn into neighbours' quarrels, and how soon the nice distinctions of international law began to be observed. To lend the ships they said was impossible, for not only they were not at war with the Æginetans, but a fundamental law forbade the hiring

[68] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 92, 93.

CHAP. II.

out vessels of war to any foreign power; but if the Athenian government chose to purchase ships, such as they required in the port of Corinth, no steps would be taken to prevent them.[69]

Colonial policy.

As was ordinarily the case with Grecian colonies, those of Corinth dissented early from the constitutional creed of their parent. In Ambracia a property qualification for the active rights of citizenship was indeed adopted in the outset, but it was soon afterwards abolished. The nobility of Leucas maintained their ascendancy till the law which rendered landed

Corcyra.

property inalienable was set aside.[70] Corcyra was early planted with settlements from Corinth, which re-produced industrial energy, and eventually became inferior at sea to the Athenians alone.[71] The hatred that arose between the Corcyræans and the mother country occasioned the first naval engagement that was fought between Greeks; and the like feeling tended in all probability to their adoption of opposite principles. They grew so strong in shipping and the munitions of war, and felt themselves so much upon an equality with the richest Grecian states of the time in commercial power and wealth, that they

Resists taxation by Corinth.

fearlessly set at nought the metropolitan claims of Corinth to ascendancy over them.[72] How far their final severance was hastened by the impolitic attempt of Corinth to impose taxes on the colonists, it were hard to say.[73] At Potidæa the chief magistrate was

[69] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 89.
[70] Wachsmuth, Vol. II. § 59.
[71] Thucydides, Lib. XXXI. cap. 33.
[72] Herodotus, Lib. III. cap. 49; Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 25.
[73] Pausanias, Lib. V. cap. 22, § 3.

annually sent from the parent state, but this is believed to have been peculiar.[74] A free spirit was not wanting at Sicyon, though it did not inspire the forms that prevailed in Megara, whose colonies, Chalcedon and Byzantium, had the peculiarity of having been founded without any order of nobility. The former grew into a place of some importance, and the latter enjoyed a lucrative and varied trade.[75]

Sicyon and Byzantium.

Megara herself gave early symptoms of the restless energy that, in the progress of its ill-regulated developement, so often raised her to the verge of true and lasting greatness, but ever balked her best ambition. The industry of her people was such, that they were called by their neighbours "the tillers of the rocks."[76] But the Megaræans seem to have often squandered in the ruinous strife of party those means of happiness and prosperity which the indefatigable toil for which they were distinguished afforded them.[77] The magnificent proofs of their architectural skill, and of their lavish expenditure of cost and labour, survived long after the troubled spirit of their independence as a community had sunk to rest.[78]

Character of the people of Megara.

The Apollonians are said to have been the only Corinthian colony that literally copied the parental institutions. They all matured their respective forms of freedom after their various notions; they

[74] Hermann, chap. 4, § 73.
[75] Wachsmuth, Vol. II. § 35.
[76] Πετρας γεωργουντες.—Isocrates, in Sym. 292.
[77] Pausanias, Lib. I. cap. 41, 43.
[78] Muller, Dorians, Book III. ch. 9, § 6.

CHAP. II.

were long impressed, as was natural, with feelings of deep respect and affection towards Corinth; and they testified their sympathy, and filial sense of obligation, "by many acts of pious duty, and by shewing themselves ever ready to fight in her ranks. But when the increase of their own power inspired them with more confidence, they grew jealous of the control of their parent, and hesitated not to break the link that previously had bound them."[79]

Domestic policy.

Whatever the faults of their colonial system may have been, the domestic policy of the Corinthians was, in most things, pre-eminently wise. They seem to have very early understood their position, and how it might be turned to most advantage. Though the traffic overland between the Peloponnesians and the continental Greeks could not at first have been very extensive, it was every year increasing, and all of it necessarily passed their gates.[80] Of the importance of rendering this intercourse safe, they seem to have been fully conscious, as well as of the best means of encouraging it. Instead of exacting oppressive tolls, which from their weaker neighbours they were strong enough to do, and of which we should infallibly have heard abundant complaints, had they thought fit to attempt it, they sedulously strove to augment them by more legitimate expedients. They greatly extended, if indeed they did not actually found, one of those national festivals or Games, the influence of which

[79] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 26.

[80] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 13.

on the manners and habits of the Greeks it is, perhaps, impossible adequately to estimate. Of these there afterwards were many originating in various circumstances and commemorative of different events. All of them partook, more or less, of the character of religious celebrations—all presented splendid and ennobling spectacles to the popular sight—all tended, in a high degree, to the political fusion and nationalisation of the heterogeneous tribes who were thus periodically induced to come together; and, finally, by all of them were inestimable benefits conferred on every species of inventive industry. They were festivals; but they were likewise fairs. They were termed Public Games—*panegyres*—as expressing that they were the common opportunity for worship and relaxation to all who were privileged to take part in them; and even the fury of war was suspended during the period of their celebration, and the truce, which permitted enemies of yesterday to meet in safety at the Isthmus, was religiously observed. They afforded places of resort for business men—halls of *exposition* for ingenious men—theatres of trial for ambitious men.

Origin of the games.

To attribute to the originators of any of these festal reunions political or commercial foresight sufficient to anticipate all the important uses which they served, would be, no doubt, an error. But it is one thing to plant a tree near your dwelling in the belief that it may one day help to shelter its isolation, and another to foresee that its destined growth

CHAP. II.

will eventually overshadow your home with its luxuriant foliage, and eminently contribute to make it an object of envy and admiration. Those who explain great events or influences by post-liminous prefaces full of deep designs which their authors (never) had in view, perplex and mar the best lessons history is capable of teaching; but we may err in the opposite extreme: in the life of nations one naturally leans to the belief that what appears to have been done systematically, was done with continuous, though perhaps inflected purpose; and when we find early, though comparatively scanty, fruit upon the branches, it is hard to think that the planting and primary culture were without design.

Industrial objects of the games.

An idea certainly prevailed among the ancients that several of the most celebrated panegyres were deliberately instituted for the united purposes of festivity and trade. Iphitus is said to have "founded the *games and fair* of Olympia" in a certain year which is named.[81] The precise year may be doubtful, but there is no doubt whatever of the mingled character of these memorable festivals; and the national importance attached to them is sufficiently indicated by the well-known fact of their institution being recognised as the Grecian era, and their periodical recurrence as the universal measure of Grecian time.

[81] Velleius Paterculus, Lib. I. cap. 8. "Eos *ludos mercatumque* instituit," &c. The year is commonly supposed to have been 884 B.C.

The privilege of presiding over each festal assembly belonged to some particular state. It was a right jealously preserved and hardly ever forfeited. That of the Isthmian games was time immemorially exercised by the Corinthians. The honour of their institution was claimed, indeed, for Theseus, and the Athenians enjoyed a special place of rank and precedency among the visitors. But the Corinthians held the games of the Isthmus and reaped the profit and distinction that arose from them. As society advanced new sources of attraction were devised to suit the changing taste and to sustain their popularity. Altars more noble were raised for the sacrifices to Poseidon, who was peculiarly honoured at the Isthmian festivals; and temples more spacious and of costlier materials were built by the Corinthians to receive the votive offerings of their visitors. The munificence of the Greeks was as much inspired as that of other nations by the love of applause, and a gift presented during the games rendered the donor happier, at least, in the popularity it purchased, if not in the inward sense of having been prompted by generous devotion. Some of the sumptuous presents made on these occasions are recorded; and the pride of being the trustees of so much magnificence would in itself account for not a little of the pains taken by the Corinthians to maintain the prestige of their panegyres.

Variety of attractions.

Wrestling, foot-races, and other athletic feats, possessed a peculiar charm for the Greeks. To

CHAP. II.

win a pine-leaf crown in one of these was an honour boasted of by persons of rank and station,[82] and valued as a source of distinction by their families, and even by their fellow-citizens.[83] Great numbers thronged to witness the competition, which took place in an arena peculiarly constructed, called the *Stadium*, which was upwards of six hundred feet in length.[84] The Corinthians erected one entirely of white marble, and a theatre likewise of the same. The shrine of Neptune stood contiguous, and the approach to its entrance lay through a long avenue of stately trees and statues of the victors in the games.

Temple of Neptune.

In the temple of the Isthmian Poseidon were four horses all of gold, except their hoofs, which were of ivory; and two Tritons were near these, the gifts of Herodis, an Athenian; Amphitrite and Neptune stood in a chariot, and the boy Palæmon with them,—all of gold and ivory. A sea also is represented, out of which Venus was seen arising attended by the nymphs.[85] Six golden cups of notable beauty adorned the treasury at Corinth; they were presented by Gyges, the Lydian, and

[82] Pausanias, Lib. VI. cap. 19, § 2; Lib. II. cap. 8, § 1.

[83] When Alcibiades asks for the command of the Athenian army he reminds the people of the splendour of his chariots at the Olympic games, where they bore off several prizes; and appeals to them whether these things did not "purchase fame for his family and himself, and confer upon the commonwealth profit and renown."—Thucydides, Lib. VI. cap. 16. And Cicero says the victor at the games in Greece was regarded with as much honour as one who had passed the consulate at Rome.—Tusc. Ques. II. 17.

[84] W. Smith, Dict. Antiq.; art. *Stadium*.

[85] Pausanias, Lib. II. cap. 1.

weighed no less than thirty talents. A throne from which Midas of Phrygia was accustomed to administer justice being admired for its exquisite workmanship, was likewise preserved in the same chamber.[86]

National benefit of the games.

The Greeks were fully sensible of the utility of these assemblages. "We justly praise their founders," says Isocrates, "who thus have accustomed us to meet as allies—our hostilities being laid aside,—to renew old ties of amity by recalling those of relationship, in common vows and offerings: to revive ancient family friendships and attachments, and to form new ones. Those who instituted these games have provided that neither the illiterate nor the refined should leave them without profit; for, by thus assembling Greeks from every place together, some are enabled to shew how rich they are grown, and others to enjoy the feats and contests: none are there without a purpose, and the greater number have something wherein respectively they can boast that they excel, or from which they hope to derive advantage."[87]

Their influence social not political.

Few, if any, of the games, had professedly any direct political object; and hence their true political importance in a national point of view. It seems rather strange to hear regrets expressed upon this score: "many celebrated panegyres were not assemblies of the wise men of the nation, but rather meetings of joyous friends;"[88]—just so: that

[86] Herodotus, Lib. I. cap. 14.
[87] Isocrates, Paneg. p. 49.
[88] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 22.

CHAP. II.

was the great good of them. It was their unsuspected character that rendered them such inestimable opportunities to the affluent and enjoying middle classes of all the cities round, for the revival of interrupted friendships — for the resuscitation of young feelings that, through time and distance, had decayed, — for the interchange of those exquisite sympathies, tearful or gay, which recollections of the past evoked, — for the formation of those ties of hope and love, that, from such glad hills of vision, it is the nature of man to seek in the future. Diplomacy and state-craft were left at home with the spiders; and distrusts and jealousies were drowned in the laugh, the bustle, and the cheer: — surely this was wise.

Fusion of tribes and races.

Amongst other good effects which the National Games produced, was the happy tendency to fusion of tribes and kindreds without which the Greek character, as it was unfolded in the days of its maturity,[89] had never been. Clever Ionians and indomitable Dorians might have occupied contiguous settlements for ages without producing any thing, either in literature, or polity, or art, comparable with that we reverence as GREEK. And in trade we can perceive evidences of the like effects of intermingling races and blending dispositions. The aboriginal Pelasgians were certainly not wanting in thrift or willingness to toil: they were active, brave, hard-working, temperate; but they seem

[89] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 15.

to have lacked the adventurous, and inquisitive, and fame-coveting spirit of the Hellenes; and, as they were too brave to submit to an unsought interfusion without a struggle, their posterity were long deprived of its benefits amid the oppression and humiliation it was their hard fate to endure. Yet until these great elements of Greek life were thoroughly agitated and commingled, we hear comparatively of little illustrative of national character: thenceforward its peculiarities gradually unfold themselves, but generally in proportion to the progress which, owing to political or social causes, had been made in the intermixture of blood, habits, and ideas. The mere Hellenic spirit of action, which is so vividly depicted in the Iliad, assumes somewhat more of a calculating air even in the Odyssey. The corsair chivalry of the following age grows weary of mischief, and enters practically into partnership with the seafaring thrift and patience of the subjugated commonalty. Thus both are improved and strengthened; the many are idealised, the few softened and disarmed. Each contributes its indispensable component part to that subtle and composite character, whose maturity displayed so much of foreign enterprise, with so deep an attachment to home,—so rapid an appreciation of the new, with so fond a veneration for the old,—so much of curiosity, daring, and invention, with so much perseverance, frugality, and self-denial.

While ruled by an ascendant caste Corinth was purely Doric, its character for enterprise was not

CHAP. II.

unfolded. The intermingling of the two races was at once a cause and consequence of the progressive acquisition by the middle classes of political power; but its specific effects on the Corinthian character were, perhaps, as great as those wrought by the organic changes that accompanied it.

Herodotus very explicitly tell us, that the Athenian stock was emphatically Pelasgian; that, until the Hellenic branch was grafted in, its fruit was neither pre-eminent in quality or abundance; but that, thenceforward, and when, moreover, further incorporations had taken place, less distinguishable, but all more or less influential in modifying the character of the community, — then "they steadily advanced in numbers and power:"[90] in what that power and prosperity consisted we shall next endeavour ot see.

[90] Herodotus, Lib. I. cap. 57, 58.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE WISE GREW STRONG.

"We Athenians have a form of rule not copied from that of any of our neighbours, but one that may furnish all of them with a good example: there is perfect equality, in the eye of the law, for all men in the adjudication of their private differences; and although, in conferring public trusts and honours, one man is chosen above another according to his standing, this is estimated not by mere family pretensions, but by his own personal worth."[1]

If the few and fragmentary notices already given of the industry of those communities whose separate annals no longer remain have sufficed to shew how various and active the competition between them must have been in all that regarded enterprise, art, and skill, we shall be enabled to take a deeper interest in the economy of that illustrious state whose life-way ran parallel and close to theirs, and whose records, self-inscribed, have, to a great extent, fortunately escaped destruction.

Had Athens stood alone as a commercial state, Athens. surrounded by nomade or pastoral tribes, and en-

[1] Thucydides, Lib. II. cap. 38.

CHAP. III.

joying, without rivalry, the privilege of exchanging the products of her ingenuity and labour for the raw produce they could supply, it is obvious that she not only could have dealt with them substantially on her own terms, but that her internal polity must have been so influenced thereby as to render all inferences from it inapplicable to the wants of modern nations. History teaches by examples, but not by exceptional instances: of these when history speaks it is with curious interest and a sigh over the futility of isolated fortunes, rather than in the cheerful tones of sympathy and encouragement. But the life of Athens was not such, either politically or industrially, although we are, indolently, prone to think and speak of the matter very much as if it had been so. And it was, in truth, partly with a view of resisting a habit which cannot but lead to infinite error, that we have hitherto forborne, save incidentally, to name Lacedæmon or Athens. From the striking prominence they eventually assumed, and doubtless owing, in some degree, to the circumstance of the greater number of historic writers, whose works have come down to us, being native or adopted Athenians,—the peculiar features and vivid antagonism of the two great rivals not only fill the foreground of every picture of Greece, but all beside is hidden: and we are beguiled at length into practically forgetting that these haughty states were, after all, but members of a family whose ties were intimate, whose interests in the main were similar, and whose fraternal jealousies were innumerable;

that, although in stature they outgrew the residue of their brethren, they neither led the way in navigation, enterprise, traffic, art, or manufacture; that the ascendancy which they alternately usurped over their fellows was no original element of Grecian life, or necessary ingredient in Grecian policy; and, finally, that it implied a condition of things which, as the event proved, was incapable of long continuance.

Parity of the Greek states.

In Solon's time and for half a century after his death, "no one of the Grecian states exercised any considerable influence over the others, and, with the exception of Sparta, none attempted to do so."[2] These were days of healthful growth in wisdom and in strength; for was not Athenè[3] the divinity whom the young devotion of Attica loved, believing that to be wise was the surest means of becoming great and strong? And the Athenians dreamed that dream of glory until it at length came true—until their wonderful city, indeed, became the high place of Greek intelligence and culture. As though gifted morally with focal power, Athens drew to herself the scattered rays of knowledge. She adopted and improved on every thing that was excellent around her. Her quickness of perception and facility of imitation taught her to appreciate and appropriate the best of what was useful or attractive in each of her neighbours. She was the radiant mirror of their glory, and combined within herself so many

[2] Heeren, Hist. Res. Vol. VI. ch. 13.

[3] Minerva.

CHAP. III.

and so various images of beauty and of power, that our admiration grows unjust, and we forget the contributive sources of so much light and lustre.

Progress of society in Attica peculiar.

Yet it is not a little remarkable that the first attempt at Athenian legislation appears to have preceded their transition through the rule of demagogue despotism, while, as we have seen, in most other states the opposite order of events is observable. Were they tardier, then, in becoming men of business, that they did not know distinctly of what they were in want, or how to use it when they had got it? We have strong grounds for believing that commercial habits were established widely at Corinth, Ægina, and elsewhere, long before they became general at Athens;[4] and the coincidence looks singular enough. Be that, however, as it may, the circumstance is well fitted to teach that lesson of which the sanguine and enthusiastic need often to be reminded, that the best institutions may prove but sources of perilous disappointment and disgust if prematurely flung amidst an eager but undiscriminating crowd. We are apt to forget how much any thing which we have ever experienced in the reception of a few particular statutes, containing few moral obligations, differs from the state of uncertainty, misapprehension, fear, — objection springing from sincere disapproval, and meditated resistance or evasion inspired by self-interested motives,— which the best of "new constitutions," or new

[4] Böckh, Book I. § 7.

codes of law, must inevitably encounter. Their intrinsic excellence is but half the question of their success. Their winning public sanction is obviously as essential to their vitality as their abstract merit,—as the striking of the root is to the life of the stem that is set in the ground. But not so obvious are the qualities of the soil, whether propitious to this root-taking or otherwise. Sanctions are of slow growth, and cannot be hastened. Popular impatience sometimes will not give time for the process to take place; sometimes the whole nature of the soil is uncongenial, and the legislator—having, as it has been the lot of too many legislators to do, overlooked its unfitness and unsuitability in his fondness for some particular object of cultivation—is doomed to see it uptorn and flung aside with scorn, or left to perish in neglect. And, finally, the popular mind may be unprepared to receive what is, in many respects, fit for it, and hence it may but linger out a sickly and precarious life, and eventually wither wholly away, though all the influences necessary for its support lay in the moral soil, unavailable through lack of previous culture.

Need of practical experience.

When, therefore, we read of early attempts at a legislation among the Athenians *before* their passage through the transition stage of popular æsymnetæ and tyranni, we are inclined to believe that, until they had learned experimentally the inherent evils of unlimited and irresponsible power in a single hand, they were incapable of obeying loyally or of appreciating intelligently and reflectingly any

CHAP. III.

constitutional systems of rule promulgated for their good. On the other hand, Athenian history indicates also the superiority of wise legislation over that which is unwise, and of the poetic justice that time occasionally renders to gentle and sagacious policy, as contrasted with the vengeful and cruel enactments of short-sighted rigour.

Laws of Draco.

Draco is uniformly described as a virtuous citizen; and he was probably as sincere and single-minded as the most mischievous persons frequently are. But he lacked the first requisite of either making good laws or administering them well—a generous and comprehensive sympathy with his kind. He knew that theft was wrong, and that it deserved punishment, and that it was frequent and pernicious, and ought therefore to be put down. He naturally believed that to accomplish this would have been an inestimable benefit to his country, as it would, indeed, have been. So he resolved to be unsparing and unrelenting. He steeled his own heart, but forgot that it was not possible to steel that of the community. He raised the axe of the executioner, and it broke in his hand. Ever from that day has popular memory painted the fate of Draco's code to its own fancy in the significant fable that its enactments were written in blood.

Character of Solon.

Solon was a man of very different stamp. Gifted by nature with great and varied powers of intellect, he possessed, in an eminent degree, that susceptibility of temperament in which, as in so

many other respects, he was the refined image of all that was good and glorious in the character of his countrymen. His tastes were contemplative and ideal. Some fragments of his poetry remain, full of truth and beauty;[5] and among the early philosophers of Ionia, he was counted one. Nor were his youthful habits of thought and self-culture repugnant to the performance of active duties, or the acquisition of practical knowledge. On his father's death, Solon found the family inheritance much impaired. He resolved to create, by his own industry, that independence of which he had probably been reared in the confident expectation, and of which he had been disappointed. He became a merchant, and travelled in the course of his business through many foreign lands, turning to account his opportunities there, not for his own temporary gain alone, but for the attainment of that knowledge of comparative political anatomy which afterwards enabled him so lastingly to enrich others. Having established himself in foreign trade, he settled at home, and lived hospitably and happily, occupied with business so far as was needful, and devoting the intervals of his leisure to study and the society of those whose tastes were congenial to his own. When Pisistratus and he were young, they had been associates and friends. There must have been many

[5] As where he delineates, in unresentful sadness, the fickleness and ingratitude of the people he had so eminently served:—

"The eyes that used to shine with sparkling joy,
Now, when I come, are almost turned away."

CHAP. III.

elements in common between two such men, and their intimacy lasted many years. But when Pisistratus betrayed the selfishness of his ambition, Solon's regard for him yielded to his sense of political right, and their friendship terminated. The circumstances of his life sufficiently tested how brave and enduring was his nature ; and its exquisite tenderness is embalmed in his touching reply to one who would have remonstrated with him for grieving at the death of his child, by reminding him that the loss was an irremediable one : " It is therefore that I mourn, because it is irremediable." Such was the man whom the Athenians asked to compile for them a code of laws. The hesitation with which he undertook the task, and the care which he bestowed upon its arduous completion, are alike in keeping with all we know of his character. He knew more than most men, and, therefore, knew more of the difficulties to be dealt with than they.

Solon's code.

What remains of his celebrated code is full of statesmanlike wisdom and genius. He wished his countrymen to become a great people. He saw that to that end there was but one way, and that was by at once allowing and enabling them to pursue their own way. He believed in national idiosyncracy and rejected whatever warred therewith, not because it was foreign, but because it could not be absorbed into the system. " He preferred adapting his laws to the condition of his country to the endeavouring to adapt his country to

his laws,"[6] and hence we look in vain among his legislative suggestions for any of the arbitrary restrictions upon property, or the use of wealth, or the forms of life, in which, as in an iron cage, Lycurgus pent up the energy of Sparta. The social and religious institutions which Solon found existing he modified with care, having due respect to their intrinsic worth, which had not grown obsolete, though some of their modes of expression were become so. Thus, for instance, he found the community consisting of tribes, confraternities, and wards. It is very usual to speak of society being *divided* into such classifications; — it were nearer to the truth to say that it was united by these varied and intermingling ties of association, the natural growth of human necessity, of the sense of individual helplessness, and of the desire for co-operation, sympathy, and mutual sustainment, which is the great root of all just or rational polity. Solon believed that the instinct of his country was industrial, and he tried to give it force, and his statutes assumed the fact that they might quicken its developement. His policy was a deep-laid and comprehensive one. It was founded upon an intimate perception of the capacities of his countrymen and of their character. It sought to guide the rising destiny of the state in the safe and profitable track of commerce, which was, indeed, marked out already, but which the great statesman

[6] Plutarch, in Vit. Solon. § 17.

CHAP. III.

wished to see beaten into a broad and populous highway. To this end he sought to embody in his code great principles of thrift, and labour, and probity, which might serve as palpable ensigns of policy on all occasions, to which the good might point in seasons of disorganisation and uncertainty, and round which the wavering or distrustful might always rally. In this light we may regard that often-quoted maxim, that every son should be obliged to support his parents in their old age; but if any father should have neglected to bring up his son to some useful occupation he should be considered as having forfeited the claim.[7] The Egyptians had a law that every man should once a-year declare before the magistrate by what means he earned his livelihood.[8] Solon adopted the idea of this law and enacted that any man who was found to be destitute of some legitimate calling should be reprehended.[9] He might be employed as an agriculturist, or a trader, or an artist, or a professional man; he might employ others, or be employed himself; but to have property and apply it to no reasonable use, Solon thought as censurable as to live in pauper indolence upon the bounty of others. Solon was the enemy of monopoly in every thing;—in land, and therefore he removed all restrictions on its disposal; in avocations, and therefore he enacted that every man might select

[7] Plutarch, in Vit. Solon. § 17.
[8] Herodotus, Lib. II. cap. 177.
[9] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. V. tit. 6, § 1.

whatever calling he preferred;[10] in commerce, and his legislation consequently aimed at insuring in all important articles of consumption a free and varied supply.

Inducement to foreigners to reside at Athens.

To this end was the fundamental principle laid down, that all men, of whatever race or clime, were free to trade at Athens; and so long as they obeyed the laws and complied with the easy stipulations annexed to their condition as "resident aliens," they might compete with the native-born citizens of the state in every branch of trade.[11] The enlightened policy which thus boldly sought to attract and attach foreign enterprise and skill as an inexhaustible stimulant to native industry, appears no way inconsistent with the political reserve which guarded the public offices and municipal privileges from foreign intrusion. A broad distinction lay between the rights of citizenship and those of resident alienage. The freedom of trade demanded the one, a young and self-distrustful nationality insisted upon the other. The time came when civic rights also were made accessible to foreigners by easy forms of naturalisation; but at no period does the policy of encouraging the competition of foreign skill appear to have been doubted.

Foreign produce.

When unimpeded by warfare or the apprehension of the pirates, who at intervals reappeared in the Archipelago and at the entrance to the Adriatic

[10] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. V. tit. 6, § 2.

[11] Böckh, Economy of Athens, Book I. § 8, p. 64.

CHAP. III.

gulf, every kind of foreign produce found its way to Athens, and as wealth and population rose, met with a ready market there. It became notorious throughout Greece that many articles which could hardly be obtained in any other town were sure of being found in the bazaars of the Piræus.[12] Of the daily wants of Athens not a few were altogether supplied by importation. Timber for ship-building was brought from Thrace and Macedonia; the finer kinds of wood used in furniture came from Byzantium and other places. Fine wool was supplied by Phrygia, and carpets by looms of Miletus. From the coasts of the Euxine, and a variety of Mediterranean ports in Asia Minor, Africa, and Magna Græcia, supplies were furnished of salt-fish, wax, certain kinds of wool and timber, undressed skins, materials for rigging, various sorts of wine, and immense quantities of iron and copper. To these might be added honey, oil, and several other things in the better descriptions of which Attica itself excelled, but which the mass of the community could have hardly been able to afford had their markets not been free. The tendency of civilisation is to turn luxuries into necessaries; it is the just reproach of misplaced taxation that it turns what have become necessaries into luxuries again. But this was not so among the people of Athens. "All the choicest products of Sicily and Italy, of Lydia, and the Pontus, of Cyprus and Peloponnesus,

[12] Thucydides, Lib. II. cap. 38.

were continually attracted into the Athenian marts, whence, in return, were conveyed to those different realms the creations of Athenian labour and skill."[13]

Export of manufactures.

And these soon became sufficiently diversified. The merchant vessel, when she had unloaded her import cargo, found easily a return freight of commodities in general demand, and some of them held in peculiar estimation. Every description of furniture, and most articles of female dress, were prized in foreign countries, as well as throughout Greece itself, if known to be Athenian. The relics of the former which have escaped the mouldering hand of time, lead us to the conviction that their reputation was not only merited by their intrinsic beauty and admirable adaptation to the wants they were intended to supply, but that the pervading sense of harmony and proportion which, even when unanalysed or specifically noted, doubtless lent so great a charm to the most familiar objects of household use or adornment, had some deeper origin than what is indolently termed happy accident. The tables, seats, lamps, pedestals, couches, drinking-cups, with the thousand accessories of refined and luxurious taste, were not fashioned in any set mould, or after any set pattern, but, as we know, were continually assuming novel forms of elegance and beauty. The taste of this people was as free as their institutions, — fickle and full of contrasts as

[13] Xenophon, De Rep. Athen. Lib. II. cap. 7.

CHAP. III.

their changeful sky, — creative and experimental as their philosophic and poetic literature.

Practical ideas of taste.

But throughout it is impossible not to be struck with the subtle and pliant adherence to harmony and proportion which characterise every article of interior embellishment, as well as every outline of exterior architecture. We read of side-tables and bedsteads, and other pieces of furniture, being ornamented with images of carved ivory, bronze, and silver;[14] and the prices are incidentally mentioned without any particular observation, as things of the kind seldom are when beyond the reach of ordinary purchasers. Can we hesitate to attribute such results to the daily and hourly teaching of that great home, rather than school, of design, amidst whose magnificent forms the artisans of Athens lived and toiled? Their eyes were familiarised from boyhood to the sight of an infinite variety of graceful outline, perfect harmony, and exquisite proportion; and the power of discriminating, as if instinctively, between what was in keeping and what was incongruous,—what possessed the charm of unity, and what betrayed confusion of design,—in a word, between artistic truth and error, — all this which, in our obtuse days, is the rare accomplishment of a connoisseur, or of one workman in a thousand, came to the craftsmen of Attica imperceptibly,—they, doubtless, scarce knew how.

Furniture.

No wonder, then, that an infinite variety of

[14] Böckh, Book I. § 19.

articles of what we designate furniture constituted a large and profitable item of the export trade. The climate and mode of living common to most of the countries adjacent enabled them to dispense with many of those things which are prime necessaries of ordinary comfort with us, and which afford employment to such vast numbers amongst us to fabricate and vend. Close carriages, down-beds, hosiery, and room-carpeting, with a thousand accessories of our chilly civilisation, were to them unknown. But it were rash to infer that less care, or labour's worth, or gold, was spent upon personal comforts and enjoyments. Their chambers contained fewer mirrors and less plate; but their porcelain was chaste and abundant; and, in the toilet of persons of both sexes, the use of costly perfumes and cosmetics was more general and fastidious. If the houses of the Greeks had few fireplaces, they had many baths; if they had few book-shelves, they were seldom destitute of specimens of art; and has it not been truly said, that "a room hung with pictures is a room hung with thoughts?"[15]

Luxuries and comforts.

So likewise in dress, whose whimsical mutations are every where proverbial, Athenian fashions by degrees grew into vogue both far and near, and numerous hands were employed in preparing a supply of shawls, and robes, and shoes, and ornaments for exportation. And how was this export trade encouraged? Chiefly, if not solely, by subjecting it

Articles of dress.

[15] Sir Joshua Reynolds.

BAYERISCHE STAATS- BIBLIOTHEK MUENCHEN

CHAP. III.

to the healthful influence of competition from every possible quarter. The ambition of Athens was not to exclude, but to excel. "*With entire freedom of industry*, and the opportunity of an extensive market abroad, through the medium of her intercourse with foreign nations, and with a vast internal demand, which was constantly increased by the influx of foreigners" (and the permanent residence of a great many of the better sort amongst them,) "all branches of trade and enterprise flourished; a large number of manufactures throve at Athens; and these necessarily employed a great amount of labour." [16]

Fashion.

In the manufacture of the many articles of dress, although the prevailing mode during the best periods was chaste and simple, the materials were more costly and diversified than is generally supposed. Beside jewels of curious workmanship and rare value, the costume of the women in the the wealthier ranks comprised many exquisite fabrics, which necessarily occupied many hands to weave. We have abundant evidence that Attic taste underwent infinite modifications. These were the reflections sometimes of sudden changes in popular sentiment,—as when the ladies laid aside the use of the clasp that formerly cinctured their loose outer robe, because some of their countrywomen were said to have torn with their buckles the face of a soldier returning from an engagement in

[16] Böckh, Book I. § 8.

which their relatives had perished, and from sharing whose fate they imagined that his cowardice alone had saved him.[17]

Iron trade.

Nor was it in the produce of the loom alone that the industry of Athens won, by dint of its superior skill, both a foreign and home market. The anvil was seldom mute within her walls. Raw iron, and tin, and copper, were imported in vast quantities: these the Carthaginians brought from Elba, Spain, and Britain.[18]

Import of iron ore.

Iron ore abounded in many lands, and the universal demand offered equal inducements to many nations to pursue so lucrative a branch of trade as its various manufacture. But their success was not alike; and the Greeks learned rapidly to excel them all. Was this attributable to the superior richness or accessibility of their mines? Not so; in the supply of the raw material they appear at all times to have rather been deficient. The native ore was regarded as of inferior quality, neither was it very abundant. But Ionic enterprise knew where to get what was wanted, and Ionic skill knew what to do with it when obtained; and the sea was open, and intercourse was free. In Elba and in Spain iron was found in more abundance and of greater malleability than any where in Greece;[19] and being smelted "in huge furnaces by the natives of those places, it was piled together like great heaps

[17] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 87.
[18] Diodorus Siculus, Lib. V. cap. 1, 2.
[19] Pliny, Hist. Nat. Lib. XXXIV. cap. 13.

CHAP. III.

of sponge, until the merchants came for it from Dicæarchia and other trading ports; and having given for it other articles of merchandise in exchange they carried it to the cities where it was cunningly wrought, and whence it was again exported to every part of the world."[20] Among these manufacturing towns we know that Athens stood high. Her artisans were particularly famous for their cutlery and armour. The father of Demosthenes employed a great number of workmen in the latter department of trade, wherein he realised a handsome fortune.

Import of tin from Britain.

From Britain, overland through Gaul, to Massilia, the indefatigable Carthaginians caused tin to be brought in large quantities, for their own use and for sale in Greece.[21] Subsequently they found their way to Cornwall by sea; and thenceforth they were enabled to furnish Athens and Tyre with a cheaper and more abundant supply; for its utility was fully appreciated, and the demand for it was great.[22] Both iron and copper were wrought into various implements of trade and warfare; and of these a considerable portion went annually to other countries; for the products of the Athenian foundries, we are told, were particularly esteemed. The quarries of Pentelus and Hymettus, both of which were situated at a convenient distance from the port, "furnished the most beautiful kinds of

[20] Diodorus Siculus, Lib. V. cap. 1.

[21] Pliny, Hist. Nat. Lib. XXXIV. cap. 13.

[22] Diodorus Siculus, Lib. V. cap. 2.

marble, which were much exported to foreign parts."[23] Incredible though it may appear to some, it never seems to have occurred to the Athenians to deprive themselves of the benefit of their own ingenuity and industry, by laws prohibiting exportation, or throwing protective impediments in its way.

Freedom of labour and of sale.

Freedom of labour and freedom of sale,—competition for all the world and with all the world,—were the guiding lights of Attic policy; and they were kept steadily in view during every vicissitude of fortune by all her truly great and honest helmsmen. To assert that they were never obscured, lost sight of, or seemingly quenched for a time in the storms of intestine faction and wild rage of war, would be idle.

Exceptions.

We hear of mutual imprecations hurled by Athens and Ægina, followed by the cooler malignity of non-consumption edicts, directed against each other's wares.[24] On another occasion we find the lamp-wicks of Bœotia prohibited in Attica, as a coercive measure in time of war; and in the latter days of the commonwealth, when its existence was menaced by Philip of Macedon, a decree was proposed in the assembly, apparently for the first time, forbidding the export of armour or the munitions of war to places occupied by the enemy.[25] But the very distinctness and fewness of these peculiar instances cogently demonstrate the freedom of the established usage; and as exceptions to any general principle of commercial legislation they can hardly be quoted at all.

[23] Böckh, Book. I. § 8.
[24] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 88.
[25] Böckh, Book I. § 9.

CHAP. III.

They were generally ebullitions of warfaring fury, or the desperate expedients had recourse to in desperate circumstances. That they were somewhat of a feminine and futile character is a different matter. Perhaps there never was an edict of international inhibition which had not in it more or less of the hysteric energy that in sober moments men confess to be unworthy of them as men. But where is the people who shall for this rise up in judgment against Athens, or condemn her? Whose hands in this respect are clean?

Industrial policy.

And if with innumerable advantages of warning and preceding experience we are conscious that we are full of merited blame in this regard, were it not worse than unreasonable to expect to find no cause for it among the ancients? Were it not in fact to look for an equanimity of temper and unruffled mirror of popular intelligence far beyond that which it is possible to find in individual life? Passion has governed nations more than reason, and present likings or aversions rather than deliberate convictions of permanent interest, under every form of rule. If among the Ionic Greeks better things were realised for a time, it was not because vehement and conflicting passions were unknown, but because other great influences were more active than elsewhere,—because the national mind was not monopolised by that which was dangerous and detrimental to its peace,—because the national attention was not always absorbed by a few exciting ideas, and the lucid intervals between such fits of popular fascination

(which are little else than political delirium) were more frequent and serene.

Legislative inconsistency.

Classic antiquarians, like Böckh and Schöman, never having had practical experience of the oscillations of popular opinion, seem unable theoretically to find the law of that great principle of elasticity (if the phrase may be permitted), which constitutes at once a distinctive peculiarity, and one of the most abiding sources of vitality and strength in popular institutions;—enabling them to endure temporarily the pressure of what appears most incongruous with their spirit,—nay, to yield to that pressure till the intruding and exceptional influence almost seems to be adopted into and identified with the general system:—then after a time leaving it to drop out of its temporary place, where by the result men discover that it had never any sympathetic hold. No man, be his book-learning what it may, can appreciate this subtle and pervading capacity of popular governments acted on by popular opinion, without long and attentive study of their action. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that such men as have been named, erudite and suggestive as their criticisms on political history are, should yet betray a frequent embarrassment arising from the conflicting facts which seem incompatible with their general theories. The accuracy of the theories themselves is of little importance compared with the exacting mastery they assume over the facts, which are, it must be owned, frequently incongruous enough: and which one cannot help believing would appear rather *more* than

CHAP. III.

less so, if we knew them better. Of many guesses at truth, that appears to me the most certainly unsound which attempts to reconcile too much, or leaves an impression on the mind that a long course of popular rule was thoroughly consistent with itself. The world has not thus wended its devious and experimental way. And if we recall, even in outline, the course of that commercial legislation with which we are familiar, and bear in mind the mutations of governing power, whether of class or of opinion, the incongruities and vacillations,—the doings and undoings, — the permissions and frustrations, — the enactments and repealings,—of periods amply chronicled if not actually within our personal recollection,—we shall hardly think it strange to find in the fragmentary and, generally speaking, undated relics of antiquity, inconsistent laws, jarring edicts, opposite practices at different times, which, if we try to force into consecutive unison, the whole becomes unintelligible and incoherent.

Provision-laws.

These observations peculiarly apply to the provision-laws of Attica, which can be reduced to no uniform standard, and yet in whose leading features we recognise all through the shifting circumstances of different times the same marked spirit of justice, wisdom, and humanity. In the first place it may be observed, that the supply of food of every description was never interdicted or restrained. All articles imported for home consumption paid certain custom-duties, "but these duties were exacted *only* for the augmentation of the revenue, and not for the purpose

of directing the course of native industry."[26] There was no encouragement of manufacturers at the cost of the agriculturists; but neither was any protection given to the farmer at the expense of the trader. So far as importation was concerned, the freedom of commerce was complete.

Popular tradition said, that during a season of scarcity Cecrops had imported corn into Attica from Sicily and Lydia; and the practice was certainly a very ancient one. As population increased the supplies of foreign grain became every year more indispensable; and at no period of which written history has cognisance were the Athenian people independent of foreign corn.

The produce of Attica insufficient for the people.

The physical circumstances of the country in fact rendered this inevitable. The total area of the Athenian territory, including the adjacent isles of Salamis and Helena, which early came to be considered integral portions of the realm, is estimated at about 874 square miles; and the average population in prosperous times may be taken at 500,000 persons of all ages and conditions.[27] Of these about 200,000 dwelt within the walls, in the city properly so called, or in the suburban quarter, near Piræus and Munychia. For the annual wants of this population 3,000,000 measures of corn are calculated to

[26] Heeren, Hist. Res. Vol. VI. § 10.

[27] St. Croix and other writers raise this amount to 639,500; but I prefer to follow Böckh's computation, who confutes, I think, the reasoning of such authors as seem worthy of being answered, and treats with the severity they deserve the superficial cavils of Hume.—Book I. § 7.

CHAP. III.

have been requisite; and the produce of their own fields seldom exceeded, and often fell short of, two-thirds of this quantity. From one-third to one-half the daily bread of the Athenians, therefore, of necessity came from abroad.

Regard for agriculture.

Nor was this the consequence of any disfavour shewn to agriculture, or of its practical neglect. Solon took infinite pains to better the condition of the industrious classes among the landholders. He gave a legal remedy for injuries done by trespass; he secured a right of use to all who dwelt within a certain distance of fresh springs,—no trivial benefit in a land where supplies of water were exceedingly precarious; and his celebrated enactments for the relief of estates from incumbrances, though questioned on other grounds, possessed at least the merit of stimulating and securing the improvement of the soil.[28] By every means he sought to increase agricultural produce, not with the vain hope of rendering the domestic supply of corn equivalent to the demand, but because he perceived in native agriculture a natural and certain source of national health and mercantile prosperity. Far from desiring or designing, by artificial means, to keep down the demands of population to the native supplies of food, or deprecating commercial progress when it outstripped the tortoise pace of agricultural improvement, Solon proposed a variety of measures, the avowed scope of which was inseparably connected with a more

[28] Plutarch, in Vit. Solon. 17.

rapid increase of population. He believed that the more skilled, industrious, and intelligent hands the city contained the better. If the country could feed them all, well; if not, they could provide themselves with subsistence elsewhere. Egypt, Sicily, and the inexhaustible realms washed by the Euxine, would be only too glad to supply the domestic deficiency; and they were capable of doing so had the demand been a hundredfold greater.

Compatible with free trade.

But the policy of Athens, Solon clearly saw, was to give every possible facility to the introduction of foreign corn. He went even farther, and rendered it compulsory on all ships that entered Piræus laden with corn to discharge two-thirds of their cargoes there—so great was his anxiety that the cost of the necessaries of life should, under all possible contingencies, be kept down by an abundant supply. It is easy to condemn such a restriction on commerce; —at least it must be admitted to have been intended *in favorem vitæ*.

Let us now glance briefly at some of the results of the system. Agriculture steadily improved. The estates, liberated from the palsying grasp of usurious mortgage, became better distributed in course of time, and small properties cultivated by their owners multiplied. The national importance of this was well understood by the statesmen of after years. It rendered invasion more terrible: but it rendered its success hopeless.

Population and over-production.

As for the apprehension that population would outstrip production, or production over-supply the

CHAP. III.

wants of the population, we are happily spared, in Grecian history, all dissertations upon that score. If any fears of the kind ever arose, they were speedily dissipated. The impetus given by trade to population reacted upon industry by a constant augmentation of demand. Instead of trying to make corn grow upon light soil never intended by nature for the purpose, the science of the Greeks was applied to discovering to what better uses it might be turned. Nor was it unsuccessful. Improvements, which no wheat crop would repay, apparently became common. Every species of gardening, both for ornament and use, was popular. Planting of every kind was carefully attended to. Vineyards and olive-yards were formed wherever it was practicable. The richer lands still yielded wheat and barley remuneratively, nor does it appear that the total quantity grown at home diminished. But the general demand kept far ahead of the domestic supply; in Demosthenes' time, there was no state in Greece which consumed annually so much corn;[29] for the great object of securing always a plentiful supply of provisions at a moderate price was gained. Periods of scarcity sometimes recurred, but they were rare, and almost without exception the result of long-protracted war, —a cause, we know, sufficient to create them in exclusively agricultural, as well as in commercial countries. There is no proof, however, that corn was ever so scarce at Athens as it was in Rome

[29] Böckh, Book I. §§ 8–15.

during Hannibal's occupation of Campania. So long as Athens was at peace the price of food could never rise exorbitantly; and, except on one or two occasions of utter and unforeseen discomfiture in war, her people knew nothing of the privations which are caused by inadequate supplies of food. CHAP. III.

With regard to exports, the policy of Solon was different from that pursued regarding importation in a few remarkable points; although, upon the whole, their practical weight is hardly appreciable when set against the general freedom of Athenian industry. In the paramount anxiety to secure cheap provisions and to render their price more equable, Solon departed from his own principles of free sale; and, lest provisions should at any time become too dear, declared that their exportation might lawfully be restrained.[30] It comes easy to us to call this a blunder; but let us remember that at least it was no selfish one—that its intention was humane—that in nine years out of ten it was wholly inoperative, inasmuch as the importations of corn were immense; and that when it did come into force, its operation could only have been to prevent the agriculturists from turning a period of general dearth to unusual and exorbitant gain. Laws of export.

Whatever its scope or intention may have been, however, we have abundant proof that this, like several other laws of Solon, fell into desuetude as

[30] Plutarch, in Vit. Solon.

CHAP. III.

society advanced and the apprehensions of his early time thawed gradually away. A loose, and at best not very intelligible, expression in Plutarch, is the foundation on which, with hardly any corroboration worthy of notice, the whole allegation rests; and it has not escaped the lynx-eyed scrutiny of Böckh, that Plutarch elsewhere seems to contradict himself, by hinting that even as regarded the prohibition to export particular kinds of fruit, the tradition was not very certain.[31] The prohibition here more especially alluded to was that of figs. Fruit is almost a necessary in all countries like Greece, and the figs of Attica were peculiarly esteemed and very plentiful.

Export of figs.

The motives which might possibly have dictated such a restriction have been variously assigned. Some conjecture that the sacred fig-trees having been robbed, the prohibition was in the spirit of some religious edict issued to appease the offended divinity.[32] Plutarch, in his easy way, alludes to the subject apparently for no other reason than to introduce a curious etymology for the epithet—sycophant. "Akin to the informers," he says, "are the calumniators, who from a singular occasion came to be designated syco-phantes, or fig-tellers; for, at a time when the export of that fruit was forbidden, they informed on such as broke the rule."[33] It is hardly possible to differ from the

[31] De Curiositate, ad finem.
[32] Böckh, Book I. § 8.
[33] De Curiositate, 17. See curious misconstruction of the passage in Amyot's translation, Œuvres Morales, I. 433.

construction put upon this statement by Böckh, that Plutarch speaks of the law as an obsolete restriction, of whose remote and forgotten existence it was necessary to remind the Athenians of his own day.[34]

Honey.

Regulations of sundry kinds were deemed necessary in codes of rural as well as civic industry, lest the grasping avarice of one man should encroach on the property of his neighbour. Thus it was ordained, that "whoever reared bees should not allow his swarms to build within three hundred paces of those belonging to his neighbour."[35] Honey was a common source of profit to the Attic farmer, and had acquired a reputation for purity and flavour abroad as well as at home. The whole community were interested, therefore, in preserving its character; and the quality would, perhaps, have been deteriorated, as well as private quarrels multiplied, had some such rule not been ordained. How far it proved effectual we know not, but its aim was manifestly sound and equitable.

Regulation of trade.

A very ancient law, the date and author of which seem equally doubtful, permitted the free export of oil, but restrained that of other agricultural produce. By some[36] this rule has been ascribed to Solon on the questionable authority of Plutarch, "for Solon thought the people of Attica needed all they grew." These early restrictions, if, indeed,

[34] Böckh, Book I. § 8.
[35] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. V. tit. 1, § 6.
[36] Ibid. Lib. V. tit. 5, § 1, et Commentar. p. 512.

CHAP. III.

they ever existed, which Böckh and other commentators disbelieve,[37] soon grew obsolete; for we find an entire series of enactments regulating, for purposes of revenue, the mode of importation and exportation of every species of commodity. None were, for instance, permitted to bring in foreign grain to any other port than that of Athens,[38] a regulation which, if we bear in mind the five per cent that corn paid and the amount imported, a glance at the indented coast of Attica will suffice to explain. Had every master of a merchant vessel been at liberty to land his cargo wheresoever he thought fit, it would have been wholly impossible to collect the duty.

Licenses to trade appear to have been rendered necessary as a measure of commercial police or possibly of revenue, if not both: for any one carrying on the business of an importer without the legal warrant for doing so was liable to a penalty.[39]

Engrossing.

The most direct interference, perhaps, with the real liberty of trade, was the severe law that for many years was maintained against engrossing. The Attic spirit was intolerant of every species of monopoly; and far from sanctioning or legalising the claim of any class of persons to exercise exclusive rights of sale for their own benefit, all attempts of the kind were deemed contrary to the policy of the law, and were punishable with great severity.

[37] Böckh, Book I. § 8.
[38] Petitus, ut supra, § 3.
[39] Ibid. § 5.

Law against Engrossing.

No man living within the precincts of the city was allowed to buy up more than fifty baskets-full of corn at a time.[40] The *phormus* was, it is supposed, a basket which contained about as much as a man could carry on his back.[41] But it seems clear that while the mass of the population adhered to industrious habits, and relied manfully on the produce of their skill purchasing for them whatsoever things of necessity or indulgence they desired, scarcity was an evil seldom felt, and the rigour of the law against engrossing slept in oblivion. How grinding want restored its edge in evil days we shall presently see.

Regulations of trade.

We must carefully distinguish between laws made for the regulation of trade and laws designed for its restraint or encouragement. The one species of legislation may indeed prove as pernicious as the other; but the difference in their aim is as wide as their usual durability. For the more effectual collection of the revenue, or the prevention of fraud upon individuals, or for the ordinary purposes of police, many ordinances, in terms arbitrary, and whose object, while unexplained, appears very unreasonable, are to be found in every commercial code. There are few sea-ports, for example, that have not their peculiar regulations, capable, as all rules are, of working casual hardships on those who, through neglect or inadvertency, set them at nought;

[40] Μηδενα των ἐν τῇ πόλει πλειω σίτον πεντήκοντα φορμῶν συνωνεῖσθαι. — Petitus, Leg. Att. Lib. V. tit. 5, § 7.

[41] Böckh, Book I. § 15.

CHAP. III.

and these are frequently enforced with a short-sighted view to local interest alone. Market-towns, in like manner, of large resort, or places where fairs are periodically held, oftentimes, in their municipal wisdom, impose such tolls and times as are better suited for the accommodation of those who frequent them constantly, than of those whose convenience, or habits of business, they care less for, and less perfectly understand. On the other hand, it is obviously no easy matter to guard one's own people against an almost unlimited extent of fraud where the influx and efflux of foreigners is great. The liberal laws of debtor and creditor, which are applicable to the members of a community who appreciate them, may fail when applied to a shifting mass of irresponsible adventurers, with whom the threat of exposure is a jest, and loss of character a phrase without meaning. Without here venturing to say where the line of distinction ought to be drawn, or whether adequate means may not be devised of obviating its necessity, it is fair to urge that these distinctions should not be lost sight of in measuring different commercial laws.

Foreigners at Athens.

One or two instances of this difference must suffice. From Solon's time, and possibly from a period even earlier, foreigners were encouraged to traffic, and to settle at Athens. It was a wise as well as generous policy, and, with brief and rare intervals of popular jealousy, was carefully adhered to. Nevertheless, we may conceive how difficult it would have been to preserve order, or a good under-

standing between the alien and native traders, without a variety of minute arrangements as to their respective modes of dealing. At first the foreigners were forbidden to sell certain goods by retail—a rule very likely to have been called for by angry disputes between them and persons of the poorer sort, arising out of an indistinct knowledge of each other's way of reckoning, or from general unacquaintance with each other's language. May not the danger of permitting such squabbles to multiply have assumed a serious aspect to the authorities? Who that has watched the vehement gestures, and heard the loud wranglings, of a mountain fair, in which crowds of every age and sex, speaking mutually unintelligible kinds of *patois*, are mingled together, can be insensible to the hazard of paltry and insignificant misunderstandings in bargaining becoming the origin of permanent aversions and ill-will between whole tribes and clans? And if this be so among the dwellers in our phlegmatic latitudes, how much more among the susceptible and exciteable children of Hellas? The exact nature of the rules devised by the Athenians to check this evil is unknown. Means no doubt were found to avoid the risk of altercations arising merely from the ignorance of the aliens of Attic speech: the permanent residence of vast numbers of them must have rapidly obliterated all trace and, perchance, the very remembrance of the causes why such rules were made. Ceasing to be needful, they ceased to be observed; and, finally, we hear of their

CHAP. III.

total abolition.[42] The alien, thenceforth, might buy or sell whatsoever he pleased.

Market-places.

But where? This was another distinction, the source of which one is naturally led to ascribe, conjecturally, to similar causes. Before the two great classes of the trading community had mutually learned to understand and respect one another, what more natural than that the authorities, who wished to protect and please both natives and aliens, should set apart separate stores, or market-places, for their use? In after-ages, when all such normal schemes and rules had with their objects passed out of popular recollection, a tradition still remained of there being two emporia, —the native and the foreign. Distinct proof of the existence of such a severance in the clearer days of Attic commerce being wanting, the tradition has been set down as a mere error. But its perfect accuracy regarding a remote period, and inaccuracy if applied to later times, seems to me rather more probable than any other hypothesis.

Law regarding freights.

The spirit of Attic legislation was to put the highest premium upon character, and to set the highest value upon good faith. But it is not unlikely that, when a vast and various desultory crowd of aliens began to throng the quays and market-places at Athens, the need of some more stringent regulations forced itself upon the attention of the government, and that to some such sense of

[42] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. V. tit. 6, § 4.

the insecurity of inexperienced persons having property which they were continually solicited to embark by way of loan in foreign speculations, we are to ascribe that curious law which fixed the return freight, to a certain extent, of vessels outward bound. It would seem as if the policy of the law was directed to securing, in some degree, the lender on commercial ventures beyond sea, by rendering the whole transaction subject to certain stipulations.

Return cargoes.

Of these the principal was, that where a merchant borrowed money from an Athenian citizen to embark it in an export cargo, the ship was bound to return within a reasonable time to Athens, with a saleable freight; one-third at least should consist of corn; but as this rule, if it ever existed thus, was certainly not enforced, the reasonable supposition is that corn, being the most important article of consumption, was specifically named, but that other articles of general value afforded various alternatives to the trader, we would find did we possess the remainder of the law.[43] The penalties for breach of this regulation are, in like manner, unknown to us; but we may, perhaps, not greatly err in conjecturing that they were provided for by the favourite mode of a guarantee given beforehand. To attribute laws like this to a restrictive commercial policy, appears to arise from a very

[43] Böckh, Book I. § 9.

CHAP. III.

superficial and inconsiderate survey of the history of Athens. Still less to the purpose were it to argue that better means of defence against fraud might have been found. How do we know? Or who that has ever thought deeply on the social difficulties of his own time will rashly venture to say so? *We* do not find such expedients necessary:— but what is that to the purpose? How can we tell that the remedies we possess (such as they are) for following defaulters in a neighbouring country existed in ancient times? And, if not, were the courts of law to sanction contracts which they had found to be ruinously frail, and from experience had a right to regard as presumptively fraudulent? We may conceive that some document, in the nature of a deed or bond, existed between the lender and the borrower where the speculation was one of foreign trade; and possibly to this document some third person as security was made a necessary party. "We have many useful and necessary laws for the protection of the creditor," says Demosthenes, "for enterprise springs less from the facilities of the borrower, than the safety of the lender, without which all would soon stand still." [44]

Borrowed capital.

A great many persons lived upon the interest of money, and trade was carried on to a great extent by sums borrowed, for a certain number of months, at a stipulated per-centage. Of these transactions and

[44] Orat. pro Phorm. 901.

the forms of security by which they were defined the legislature took special and minute cognisance.[45] A considerable portion of the capital employed in foreign and domestic trade was thus obtained; and as the easy and enjoying habits of the better classes, and the custom of distributing property among the children according to their need or their desert, combined to check permanent accumulations, money in large masses was comparatively scarce, and the interest obtained for it was generally high. Ten per cent was deemed very reasonable; and merchants and manufacturers frequently could not obtain what they required under fifteen or twenty.[46] CHAP. III.

Interest of money.

No attempt was made by Solon to fix arbitrarily the rate of interest for money, nor is there any trace of usury laws in subsequent times.[47] The natural consequence ensued, that various rates were paid at the same time by different persons, according to the credit they respectively were in, a point of banking wisdom which modern nations have taken some centuries in arriving at, and which it does not yet seem quite clear whether they even now understand. The absence of any other exchangeable medium than gold and silver must of necessity have tended to perpetuate high rates of interest. It was probably with some indistinct notion of increasing the circulating medium, or at least of having a more

[45] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. V. tit. 4.

[46] Böckh, Book I. § 22.

[47] Ibid.

CHAP. III.

portable representative of value, that the wise Carthaginians resorted to the expedient of tokens formed of sealed leather, "which were issued only by the state," and bore the impress of its sanction and the nominal value represented.[48] Some of the Greek states had a copper coinage and some had one of iron; others had a currency to which an artificial value was affixed by law. As none of these would be taken in exchange by foreigners, they formed, as, in certain instances, they were designed to form, an impediment to commercial intercourse.

Athenian currency.

Athens, very characteristically, adopted a gold and silver coinage from the first, and by not only steadily adhering thereto, but faithfully preserving its purity, the impress of her mint became habitually recognised throughout all Greece, and even beyond its boundaries, as the most certain value that could be offered in exchange. What facilities must such a currency have afforded to her merchants, and how beneficially must so high and inflexible a standard of value have affected the entire industrial *morale* of her system!

Recurring to the subject of the navigation-rules, it may be observed that we have tolerably distinct proof that the law of return cargoes did not operate as a fetter upon trade. Return cargoes were constantly arriving, of which corn formed no part. Instances are particularly mentioned of ships

[48] Heeren, Hist. Res. Vol. IV. ch. 4.

that had taken an outward freight from Athens, returning entirely laden, some with salted provisions, others with Coan wine.[49] And upon the whole, it may be considered tolerably plain, that rules of this kind were regulations of trade for the purpose of checking fraud, and not restrictions intended to serve particular interests or sections of the community, any more than the assize of salt to which recourse was, for a time, deemed necessary, or the obligation to sell corn by samples exposed at the *deigma*, a place appointed specially for their reception near the landing-wharfs.[50]

Commercial police.

For the enforcement of these, and, doubtless, a multitude of other minor regulations, the very names of which have perished, there was an elective executive, consisting of officers in various capacities and to whom different duties were assigned. The magistrates of the emporium,[51] the comptrollers of the markets,[52] the clerks of the corn-tables,[53] the inspectors of weights and measures,[54] were all chosen annually, and had their distinct functions to discharge. Much pains was taken to compel a strict fidelity to the standard weight and measure of every article, and especially of grain.

Laws of debtor and creditor.

Generally speaking, the Athenian laws of debt were regarded by the ancients as eminently humane. Every one who disputed the claim of his creditor had a right to demand bail, and thus to preserve his

[49] Böckh, Book I. § 9.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Επιμεληται του εμπόριου.
[52] Αγορανόμοι.
[53] Σιτοφύλακες.
[54] Μετρονόμοι.

CHAP. III.

liberty until final judgment was pronounced against him by a competent jury. But he was thenceforth bound to work, under certain regulations, for the benefit of his creditor, and so far was regarded as his bondsman until the debt was paid. Various opportunities, however, were afforded him of regaining his liberty, if he could find bail; and if, by industry, he earned the sufficient sum, he could demand his release as matter of right. Of the latter, instances were very frequent; and the former will for ever be kept in remembrance by the name of Plato, who, having failed to make good his engagements as an oil-merchant, might have wasted many years of his life in servitude, had it not been for the generosity of his friends, who, among them, adopted his liabilities. Such laws sound harsh and cruel in our ears, and we are ready to condemn the rigour of antiquity with as much severity as if we had not ourselves tolerated and approved, until yesterday, laws of debtor and creditor to the full as pitiless and infinitely more pernicious and irrational. The Athenians said, "whoso spends the money of another shall work till he has repaid it;" we, in our nineteenth-century wisdom, varied the penalty to thrusting the defaulter into a gaol, wherein it was nearly impossible that he could ever earn any thing towards his redemption. Bondage is a bitter word, but imprisonment for life, in a naked and unwholesome cell, is assuredly a more miserable doom.

Frauds.

But Ionic clearness of perception justly discri-

CHAP. III.

minated between the generous and forgiving policy of enterprise, and the immoral and unwise imbecility of legislation, which affords impunity to fraud. Deception and malversation of every sort were visited with extreme rigour. To withdraw surreptitiously the security on which a merchant had relied, was looked on as an offence of such magnitude, and regarded as such a poisoning of the fountain-head of all commercial confidence, that it merited the punishment of death. Far be it from me to say aught in favour of that spirit of legislation which weighs human life against mere property. Industry and its rights are very precious; and mercantile industry cannot long thrive or live unless wealth, which is its fruit, and which contains the germ of its reproduction, is safe, and is felt to be so. But there is that which is more precious still, and whose paramount claim to be regarded above all else, is at length becoming somewhat better recognised among modern nations. Yet the ghastly records of our own criminal jurisprudence, with its decimation of sheep-stealers, and sentences of "justifiable homicide," for shooting snarers of game, may well make us hesitate to enter into judgment with the Greeks for visiting deliberate fraud with the penalty of death.

Division of labour.

Under this wise and fostering policy employments were multiplied; and the desire to economise time and skill gradually and tentatively suggested the better subdivision of labour. In the mirror of popular language these changes were faithfully reflected. The Greeks were prone to nice distinctions, and the

CHAP. III.

marvellous flexibility of their dialect afforded them peculiar means of gratifying their subtle and fastidious taste. Hence not only every calling had its own expressive title; but when in the progress of refinement its subordinate branches became distinguishable, curious inflections of the original term were invented, or the novel crafts assumed entirely new appellations, leaving the old name to be applied in a modified or a restricted sense to the most important one.

Emporia.

Not very long after Solon's time, the phrase *emporion* occurs in a signification that does not admit of its being taken as a mere synonyme loosely applied to dissimilar places of sale. Amphytrio, one of the characters in a comedy, where the language is naturally pointed and graphic, is introduced saying that he has been seeking an acquaintance "in the temples, the wrestling-schools, and the market-place; at the apothecary's, and the barber's; in the provision-market, and the emporium."[55] From a variety of sources we gather that the emporium was specially devoted to the warehousing and sale of goods imported from other countries by sea. The duties levied upon them are distinguished as "emporium dues" from those yielded by the products of home growth or manufacture, which were sold elsewhere:—in other words, the excise was distinguished from the customs. In like manner the persons were

[55] Plautus, in Amphyt. IV. 1, 4. See Art. *Emporium* in Smith's Dictionary.

discriminated who trafficked in these different descriptions of places. The wholesale merchant was termed importer—*emporos*. The changes in the use of the word are curious enough. Homer uses it to denote any one who sailed as a passenger in another's ship;[56] but subsequently it came to be applied distinctively to the class of traders who existed not in the poet's day. Those whom he thus designated were indeed sometimes importers of timber, copper, wool, and other articles of necessity in the earlier stages of civilisation; but the notion of their keeping vessels for the purpose does not seem to have been within the poet's contemplation; and we have ample reason to infer, that when the adventurous voyager of that period had got his foreign commodities safe home, he was only too much obliged to any body who would buy them from him by retail; and that he was willing to give small portions of them in barter for whatever, either of goods or services, was to be had in exchange. "Homer never mentions the use of money, though frequently having occasion to allude to transactions of barter."[57] In the life of the poet,[58] it is said that his step-father, Phænias, was paid in wool for the lessons he gave in music and letters to the youth of Smyrna, a place even then of considerable trade,—exporting corn, and receiving wool in return.

[56] Odyssey, II. 319; XXIV. 300.

[57] Heeren, Hist. Rest. VI. 10.

[58] A work erroneously ascribed to Herodotus. Its great antiquity is, however, certain; and regarding an incidental fact like the above, its testimony may be taken *quantum valeat*.

CHAP. III.

Commercial relations with foreign states.

On the commercial relations that subsisted between the Greeks and foreign nations, we are without any adequate information. The importance and permanence, however, of their intercourse with the Phœnicians, Egyptians, Carthaginians, and Etruscans, are abundantly attested. Egypt was for ages exclusive, and opposed to mercantile habits; but of the rest the genius was eminently free and industrial; and their policy in a great variety of respects bore a close resemblance to that of the Ionic Greeks. By the side-light shed from certain portions of their history, we may possibly discern the elements of a fair and reasonable presumption as to what the external relations of Athens and Corinth may have been.

Etruscans.

The earliest commercial treaty whereof any memorial has been preserved was one between the Carthaginians and Etruscans. When as yet Mount Aventine was a wolf-walk, and in the clefts of the Tarpeian rock eagles of but inarticulate and undisciplined rapacity had as yet brought forth their young, the Etrurians were the most influential race in Italy. Their fruitful land, rich in natural treasures, supplied abundant materials to their commercial insight and enterprise; and there was a time when the ports of Tuscany must have been the staples of commerce for the countries on the Mediterranean, the other districts of Italy, and the remote Gallic realms, with whose inhabitants a communication was secured by an ancient highroad across the Alps. All their public works—the very ruins of which

astonish us—had a great public object. They were not pyramids or obelisks multiplied without number, but edifices of national utility,—in which respect we must not overlook the great superiority of the Etruscans to the Egyptians.[59] Their civilisation was not merely physical. All that we can catch of its dying murmurs bears a strong accent of political freedom. Antiquarians only will venture now to speak positively of its forms. We, who are but students with but a few brief hours to bestow on such inquiries, must be content to mark the general characteristics only, and be thankful that about so much at least we have to grope our way through comparatively little controversy. The Etruscans were emphatically an emulative people. They had many cities—leagues of cities—and these so severally important and co-equal, that their scholastic exhumers cannot settle which of them was the greatest,—their huge bones still undecayed and overground bearing witness that at least there were architectural giants in those days. Twelve large towns governed by a federal combination Etruria Proper. Twelve others, not disunited from these, were studded along the Venetian-Lombard plain. As many others are alleged to have occupied Campania.[60] Many of these were on or near the coast; and thence the command they at one time possessed of the whole Tyrrhenian sea; thence, also, the facility wherewith they sent forth large fleets on warlike

[59] Niebuhr, History of Rome, Vol. I. pp. 129, 130.

[60] Arnold, History of Rome, Vol. I. p. 424, &c.

CHAP. III.

expeditions.[61] It is certain, moreover, "that there was an active commerce carried on between Etruria and the free cities of Greece very advantageous to both nations. We know this by the surest evidence, namely, by the vast quantities of Greek, and, in particular, of Athenian pottery, found in the recent excavations at Vulci and Tarquinii."[62]

The earliest commercial treaties upon record.

Still more important relations, however, subsisted between this remarkable people and the Carthaginians. With the Sicilian Greeks, if not with their elder brethren, there was, probably, less cordial friendship. The merchant-ships of each were oftentimes exposed to the piratical assaults of the other. Both traded with the great Lybi-Phœnician commonwealth; and how the Punic and Etruscan traffic was protected and encouraged by the sagacious policy of those two distinguished nations, we are informed upon impartial testimony. When at the summit of prosperity they entered into commercial treaties, which appear to have been extant in Aristotle's time. "The Etruscans and Carthaginians, and *other maritime nations*," he tells us, "are linked together by the bonds of reciprocal traffic; the exports and imports between them are carefully regulated by treaties; courts of justice are jointly established, wherein the citizens of one state may sue for redress of injuries inflicted by those of another; and in whatever new alliances they severally form with other or hostile

[61] Niebuhr, Vol. I. p. 128.

[62] Arnold, Vol. I. p. 428.

nations, it is stipulated that all should share the commercial benefits thence arising.[63] Whatever reservations or subordinate restrictions there may have been in detail, it is impossible to deny the free spirit in which such a compact was conceived. And still further is our sense of its value heightened when we find that the conventions here referred to were in nowise the offspring of any transient fantasy, or pacific interlude in habitual feelings of jealousy of each other's industrial prosperity, but formed part of a great international scheme of policy, which, maintained with zeal and fidelity[64] through every vicissitude of domestic and foreign change, contributed to hold these powerful "natural enemies," as they would have been called in more conceited times, in terms of friendship for centuries. —What barbarians!

Other Punic treaties.

Did similar relations, then, subsist between the Carthaginians and their other neighbours? In the majority of instances we cannot tell. Conjecture may plausibly weave an extended tissue of like wisdom over the vast extent of Punic navigation; but, for all practical purposes, conjecture is an unmerchantable commodity; and, while we are far from under-estimating its high value in the master mind of the true historian, we must be careful how we lean too heavily upon its fine-spun fabric in

[63] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. III. cap. 6.

[64] Arnold, Vol. I. p. 431.

CHAP. III.

reasonings that may be, from their time or tendency, subjected to the brute force of party criticism.

But in one signal instance we are fortunately able to dispense altogether with the aid of conjecture, and are permitted to read the commercial maxims of Carthaginian policy, not, as in the case of the Etruscan treaties, through the explanatory paraphrase of a commentator, but in the actual words of the treaties themselves. And these, strange to say, are the treaties made by Carthage, at different periods and under varied circumstances, with the greatest of her enemies and rivals—Rome!

Reciprocity treaty between Rome and Carthage.

The history of these memorials of antique wisdom is singularly interesting. The earliest of them was made in 509 B.C., the first year after the expulsion of the Tarquins, and consequently during the consulate of Brutus and Horatius, whose attesting names it is probable that it bore. It was graven, as was customary, upon tables of brass; and thus recorded not only its date and authors, but, as will be seen by its tenour, the precise maritime limits of the Roman commonwealth at the time. And hence, perhaps, the silence of the Latin chroniclers regarding it; for these limits were subsequently much contracted, and many of the Roman writers are open to the suspicion of having suppressed their knowledge of a document which divulged the early greatness of Rome and her decline after the banishment of the Tarquins,—a

fact which the governing power of after times was desirous of keeping concealed.[65]

Polybius and Livy.

Fortunately Polybius had no such inducement to observe silence on the subject; and when collecting materials for his history, he found these brazen tables in the archives of the ædiles in the Capitol. The dialect in which they were inscribed, however, had become so entirely obsolete, that it was not without difficulty he could get them deciphered; nor was it until he had recourse to the aid of certain learned men of the day, that he succeeded, as he tells us, in coming at their full meaning.[66] But for his research and perseverance all trace of these curious documents would, in all probability, have been lost. For in the burning of the Capitol, which occurred soon afterwards, the original tables were destroyed; and Livy either had never seen any copies of them—if such existed in his time—or he omitted to transcribe them. "It may be," says his unsparing critic, "that he made no inquiries at all for what was authentic in these ancient times; perhaps Macer (who, among the annalists, out of whose labours Livy constructed his work, seems to have spent the greatest care upon original documents,) had never read Polybius; and it is not unlikely that the tables had perished before Macer began his researches. Thus much may be considered as certain, that Livy, whose practice throughout was only to collect the mate-

[65] Niebuhr, Vol. I. p. 583. [66] Polybius, Lib. III. cap. 22.

CHAP. III.

rials of his work during its progress, did not make use of Polybius, whose value was by no means generally recognised in those days, till he reached the Punic wars. When he wrote his second book, he, probably, had never heard of this treaty."[67]

General scope of the treaty.

The treaty, whose date was too remarkable to be easily mystified or forgotten, specially names the chief ports of the respective commonwealths. Carthage stipulates for herself and her allies generally, whether in Sardinia or Africa; Rome is equally comprehensive in her conditions, and particularly names five cities of importance which stood at widely distant points of the coast of Italy. As was natural, also, considering the nature of maritime intercourse at the period, each government seeks anxiously to guard against the encroachments of the other, by defining, carefully, the range of ports and harbours to which foreign vessels might come for the purposes of trade. It is obvious, indeed, that in every state like Carthage, where a considerable portion of the revenue was raised by customs, some limitation of the sort is indispensable. No duties on importation could be equitably or efficiently raised if vessels might run ashore wheresoever their owners pleased. There were also other, and still more imperative motives for guarding against license in this particular at the period in question. The universal sin of maritime antiquity was piracy. Greeks, Etruscans, Siceliots, Romans,

[67] Niebuhr, Vol. I. p. 533.

and Phœnicians,[68] were all, though not alike, liable to this reproach.[69] As each commercial state attained to eminence, it instinctively repudiated the practice, and sought to put it down. Police, whether by sea or land, is the want of opulence and civilisation. Thus Athens, in the early days, and Rhodes, in the latter periods of Greek commerce, undertook the office of chief constable of the sea; and the Etruscans, who at one time are branded with the epithet of corsairs, in the era of their fame were, doubtless, sincere in leaguing with their powerful neighbours to keep the peace of the sea.

Roman piracy.

At the period when the treaty in question was framed, Rome was still at the piratic time of life; Carthage had long passed it. Neither had there as yet any thing worthy of the name of a fleet, for the purposes of war or trade, issued from the Tiber. But a number of seafaring communities along the western coast of Italy paid tribute to the Romans, whose unfastidious senate, and, if possible, still less fastidious people, had little objection to their vassal-allies levying spoil at their own risk wherever they might rove. These sea-birds of prey did not confine themselves to plundering merely the wayfarers of the deep; they were accustomed to extend their flight to distant unprotected regions, where they descended suddenly, made their own of the property of the inhabitants, and not un-

[68] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 8. Vol. III. p. 423; Arnold, Vol. I. p. 428.
[69] Niebuhr, Vol. I. p. 128;

CHAP. III.

frequently seized on numbers of the peasantry themselves, whom they carried away to sell for slaves.

These nautical forays were often made under the plea of peaceful visits of trade; and the Carthaginians wisely resolved to insert such limitations as, without obstructing legitimate traffic, would take away all pretexts for lawless descents upon their indefensibly extended seaboard. The policy of doing so, and of making Rome responsible for the proceedings of her tributaries, was sufficiently clear.

Provisions of the treaty.

The treaty provided, therefore, on the part of the Romans and their allies, that their vessels should not "sail into the African ports, eastward of the Fair Promontory, unless compelled to seek refuge from an enemy or in stress of weather; and that in case they should be obliged to do so, they should take nothing away with them, or open any traffic there, save for such things as might be needful to refit, or were required for the performance of religious ordinances; and that they should depart again within five days."[70] The quarter whence they were thus especially debarred was the opulent province lying beyond the Hermæan Cape, which was called Emporia. It was full of rich towns and villages, being the peculiar seat of industrial establishments of different kinds; and it is with good reason supposed to have contained the entrepots maintained

[70] See Appendix, in which the treaties will be found *in extenso*.

for the overland trade with Egypt. Was it strange that Carthage should anxiously protect her Lancashire? Would she have been worthy to have such a province, if she omitted any opportunity of fencing it round with all the skill her diplomacy could suggest? If any one is so freedom-mad as to doubt the wisdom of her care in this respect, let him ask the first manufacturer he meets, what sum he would not give to avert the bivouack of a horde of Cossacks for a single night in the market-place of Manchester?

Free trade.

But how utterly different the motives which indited this precaution were from those which seek to fetter traffic, and which plan navigation-laws, the second clause of the treaty places beyond dispute. Far from wishing to restrain competition, the Carthaginians sedulously provide for it, both in the cities of Italy and in their own. Emporia feared not rivalry; it only shuddered at piracy and plunder. Its free-hearted skill desired to compete with that of Italy in Rome, as with that of Greece at Corinth and at Athens; and it challenged the Italians to bring their wares into every recognised port of Africa and the islands, as well as into Carthage itself;[71] not under the crippling disadvantage of differential duties, but upon the same terms in *all* respects as Carthaginian goods were brought there.

The words are too notable to be abridged or broken from their venerable order. "The mer-

[71] Niebuhr, Vol. I. p. 535.

CHAP. III.

chants (of Rome and her allies), who may think fit to offer *any kind of goods* for sale in Sardinia, or any port of Lybia, shall pay no customs, save the ordinary fees which all men pay to the scribe and auctioneer; and the public faith (of Carthage) shall be a guarantee to the merchants for whatever they shall sell under the sanction of these government officers."

Comment upon the general tenour of these memorable expressions were superfluous.

Commercial treaty of 348 B.C.

But it may perhaps be said, that the Romans, in the year 509 B.C., were not a trading people; and the mercantile importance of their Etruscan allies having declined, they were not, perhaps, just then likely to provoke the jealousy of Carthage. Let us see, therefore, if her maxims changed with the development of her rival's greatness by sea as well as land. It is supposed[72] that a second treaty was made several years later between the rival commonwealths, of which no record now remains; but we come at last to the eventful eve of their mighty struggle for life and mastery. In 348 B.C. a new convention was ratified between them, having chiefly in view commercial objects; and this, like the one already quoted, has fortunately been preserved.[73]

It commences, like the former, by endeavouring to place limitations, not indeed on trade, but upon the marauding incursions of the Romans, who had begun to evince a growing taste for maritime ex-

[72] Niebuhr, Vol. III. p. 87.

[73] Polybius, Lib. III. cap. 25.

ploits,[74] similar in character to those for which they had long been celebrated on land. With what justice Carthage early betrayed her presentiment of the mode in which Rome would be one day known at sea, the details of the subsequent wars abundantly prove. Expeditions into Africa were again and again undertaken solely for the purposes of spoil. When a consular army in Sicily needed provision, the general, or his lieutenant, with a light-armed band, would cross over to the Lybian shore, and landing at some unguarded point, pillage the defenceless inhabitants, commit their dwellings to the flames, and retire, as rapidly as they had come, laden with booty. Livy celebrates four pre-eminent achievements of this description within the space of a few years;[75] and who shall tell of all the rapine and desolation which he deemed commonplace and hardly deserving mention? It is not improbable that while the two governments yet preserved relations of amity, many exposed portions of the Punic territory may have been rifled of their property by Italian buccaneers. Be that as it may, the treaty of 348 B.C. provides that "the Romans shall not sail (into any Punic harbour) *in search of plunder*, or open any trade, or build any city, beyond the Fair Promontory, Mastia, or Tarseium." Somewhat farther on it is stipulated that "if any Romans land in search of

[74] Niebuhr, Vol. III. p. 241. So early as the second Samnite war they tried to import timber from Corsica by rafts, for building large vessels.

[75] Livy, Lib. XXII. cap. 31; Lib. XXVI. cap. 31; Lib. XXVII. cap. 5; Lib. XXXVIII. cap. 4.

CHAP. III.

water or provisions on any place subject to the Carthaginians, they shall be supplied with all that they require; but thereupon they shall depart without taking any thing by violence from the subjects o. Carthage or their allies; and a breach of these conditions shall not be avenged as an individual injury, but shall be prosecuted as the public cause."

The motives for guarding against incursions, under pretence of trade, into the valuable province eastward of the Fair Promontary, thus apparently subsisted still. Free trade had not ruined Emporia; and Emporia was not weary of free trade. The new points of limitations were in other directions. It appears tolerably certain that Tarseium meant Cadiz; and, perhaps, we may not err in supposing Mastia to have been the designation of some Punic colony on the opposite coast near the Columns of Hercules.[76]

Roman visits to Sardinia.

Another clause prohibited the Romans from *visiting* Sardinia under pretence of trade. What manner of visits they used to pay that luckless isle we learn from other sources. To provide means of tilling their public domain or conquered lands, it was found necessary to steal agricultural labourers from foreign countries. The free population of Italy had been decimated in the course of the struggle which gave their territory to Rome; and the victors preferred leaving their new estates desolate, to allowing the eradicated owners to

[76] Stephans appears inclined to place Mastia in Spain:— Heeren cannot decide where it was.

take root in their familiar soil again. It suited the Roman ideas of trade (and it unfortunately jarred but too little with the best morals of the time) to fit out privateers for the purpose of capturing slaves wherever they could most easily be found. At a later period these expeditions were a public concern, and were chiefly occupied in replenishing the exhausted race of Italian labourers with Sardinian slaves, until, at length, "*Sardi venales*" became a proverb at Rome to express things of the least possible value.[77]

Sicilian markets.

Notwithstanding all these geographical limitations, however, the spirit of Punic industry attests, in unmistakeable terms, its fidelity to its early faith in free competition. The great market-place of all international commerce, when this convention was made, was Sicily, in which Carthage had never previously possessed so much influence, and in which Rome had as yet obtained no footing. But the dense and disciplined population of the country defied the hostile visits of the Romans, and the manufacturers of Carthage despised protection against any fair or peaceable competitors. What says the treaty? "In all the parts of Sicily that belong to the Carthaginians, as well as in Carthage itself, the Romans may exhibit their goods for sale, and do every thing connected therewith, upon the same terms that citizens of the republic do: the like privilege being accorded to Punic merchants at Rome."

[77] Arnold, Vol. III. p. 28, note.

CHAP. III.

In Sicily the Greeks and Carthaginians were for many generations brought into daily contact. The country was, for a long time, divided between them; and, in the wavering fortunes of war, several of the frontier towns many times changed hands. In peace their relations must have been intimate, Syracuse and other Grecian ports being constantly filled with Punic shipping. Elsewhere the two nations were mutually well acquainted and ever desirous to interchange the produce of their skill. The woven goods of Carthage were in request among the Ionians, and Polemon wrote a treatise upon them in Greek.[78] Between Carthage and Cyrene, also, a good understanding generally prevailed. Many Greeks traded to Carthage, and the Punic merchant is spoken of in comedy as one of a class familiarly known at Athens.[79]

Taking all these circumstances, then, into account, considering the general freedom of Athenian commerce, and weighing fairly the evidence before us of the commercial policy of Carthage, it is hardly too much to presume that, had the intercourse between the two nations not been free, we should find, in the garrulous chronicles and criticisms of the Greeks, some censure, sarcasm, jest, or explanation, regarding such an anomaly.

[78] Heeren, Hist. Res. Vol. IV. ch. 5.

[79] Plautus, Pœnulus, Act V sc. 2, v. 54.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE STRONG GREW VAIN.

"Not from the example of the Athenians only, but from that of many others, it may be shewn that a free government is the best. While the Greeks were subject to tyrants, they excelled not their neighbours in renown; but when they were delivered from oppression, they surpassed them all. So long as they were under the restraint of a master, they were incapable of great enterprises; but after they had won their freedom, every man plied with energy the abilities he had for his own sake."[1]

At the close of the heroic age, the governments of Greece, as we have seen, were similar and few. In the progress of society, these ancient realms were broken up into a great number of dissimilar and independent commonwealths. Lacedæmon had, indeed, increased, rather than diminished, in extent; and Thessaly and Bœotia remained nearly as they were. But at the beginning of the sixth century, the isles were, almost without exception, free;[2] and, on the mainland, there were at least

[1] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 78.

[2] Corcyra, Rhodes, Tenedos, Cos, Lesbos, Ægina, Naxos, Eubœa, Chios, Paros, Zacynthus, and Samos, enjoyed, in a greater or less degree, the benefits of self-rule before the Persian war.

CHAP. IV.

twenty city-states that, in their domestic affairs, recognised no other law than that which was enacted by their own senates and administered by their own magistracy.[3] And the tendency of all this to foster industrious and self-reliant habits, and to be strengthened by them, is sufficiently plain.

Patriotism of the Greeks.

However they might differ in external forms, the aim of all was to make every free man feel himself a part of the state, and so to organise the state as to concentrate its power, when required, in favour of the least of its injured members, or for the punishment of the most powerful contemner of the law.[4] "The principle, that the idea of the state is antecedent to that of an individual, was that whereon the whole political system of Greece was originally founded."[5] The being sprung from citizens of the state, and the having a home within its boundaries, were the essential claims of citizenship; and this idea of citizenship was become the paramount one of Greek life, to which all others were subordinate. In many of the states there was hardly a trust or station to which a meritorious citizen might not aspire. The eupatridæ, or good families, kept up certain social distinctions; and, as we shall hereafter have occasion to notice, preserved, for a long time, peculiar eligibility to a few

[3] Athens, Corinth, Elis, Mantinea, Tegea, Argos, Sicyon, Phlius, Hermione, Ambracia, Træzen, Megara, Platæa, Cleonæ, Halicis, Thyrea, Epidamnus, Cuma, Orchomenos, Apollonia, Orneæ, Mycenæ, Opus, Delphi, Byzantium, Naupactus, and Calydon.

[4] Arist. Polit. Lib. I. cap. 1, § 11.

[5] Hermann, ch. 3, § 51.

of the higher offices. But "the various codes agreed in making the relation in which all classes of citizens stood to the law uniform and immediate."[6] The heart of industry beat high,—for it felt itself honoured, secure, and free.

Nationality.

Each little community enjoyed its own frame of rule, differing, in many respects, from those of its neighbours, but as strongly expressive and admonitory of self-respect among its subjects as that of the most opulent or famous of them. The patriotism of the Greek was intense, because every object he esteemed and loved was intrusted to his daily care. If not actually invested with a share in the government, he was continually incited to aspire to being so, for trade and invention were free and open, and their gains certain and great. With industry and perseverance there was nothing which he might not one day hope to attain. Every selfish interest was linked with the noblest feelings of his nature; and the tender associations of domestic life, which elsewhere check public spirit and self-devotion, were, among the Greeks, its most potent stimulants.[7] They were a commercial people, and had, therefore, cause to shrink from the burdens of protracted war and the ruinous damage of invasion: but they were a free people, and they knew that at whatever hazard their freedom, even for industry's sake, was worth defending unto the last extremity. When the invader, therefore, came, there was no

[6] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 41. [7] Herodotus, Lib. V. cap. 87.

CHAP. IV.

debate on the profit and loss of submission, save where the unanimity of defiance was broken by party jealousies, as in Ægina, or its strength paralysed by recent disaster, as at Argos. But wherever the industrial communities of Greece were free to choose, their heart laughed at the thought of submission, for they had been trained from childhood to regard country and existence as one. This was the spirit that garrisoned Greece, and which nothing but extermination could subdue.

The Persian invasion.

And now came the great trial of the national constancy and faith in freedom. Not very many years[8] had seen the city-states of Greece, each in its own self-reliant way, working out the problem of popular industry and rule, when the monarch of the East sent his heralds to demand that tribute which all other nations had been forced to yield.[9] Young Greece, with sunny scorn, refused, and flung down her defiance to "the great king." Then came the fearful pause, which the brave alone can know, the holding of the breath that comes when the irrevocable word hath gone forth, on whose result depend the honour and the safety, perchance the very existence, of all.[10] Impulse had done its duty. 'Twas right to answer the proud tyrant so; but now

[8] The final expulsion of the Pisistratidæ took place in 510 B.C., and Marathon was fought in 490.

[9] "The Persian empire had never been so great. From the rising to the setting sun, there appeared to be no power that could rival its majesty, none from which it could not enforce submission.—Thirlwall, chap. 14.

[10] See the account of the taking of Samos not long before this by the Persians, when hardly an inhabitant was left upon the island.—Herodotus, Lib. III. cap. 149.

reflection asks, What chance have ye against such an adversary? Each city-state, mute-stricken, asks, How many are within the walls?—How few! Who first must fall? By what path will he come? Could we all stand together, fight side by side, for all, and in the sight of all; but thus isolated, separated, lone,—it is an hour of utmost agony!

Conduct of the various states.

Some waverings there were, and backslidings; and some bethought them of a double purpose, more fatal to their brethren than even Persia's host.[11] Would men believe it now, if they were told the contrary? Not those who know what man is, and what institutions make him. Let it be remembered that if there were many popular governments in Greece, there were also many oppressive ones. Had all resisted equally well, where had been the lesson in their glory? where the example to mankind? Crete, with her multitudinous public and private slavery, and her pure Doric constitution, openly refused all aid;[12] while the gallant men of Naxos, whose fame it was that they were so ruled as to be the lightest-hearted people of Greece, single-handed braved for months the whole wrath of Darius.[13] When first appealed to in the common cause, Sparta listened coldly, and suffered the Ionic cities to be laid in ashes ere she would consent to arm;[14] while

[11] Herodotus, Lib. VII. cap. 168.

[12] Ibid. cap. 169.

[13] Ibid. Lib. V. cap. 28.

[14] Ibid. cap. 97. Yet Müller, carried away by his idolatry of the Doric name, would have us believe, that in Sparta "Greece found the only means of effecting the union so necessary for her safety and success." — Dorians, Book I. chap. 9, § 5.

CHAP. IV.

the Lesbians, Chians, and Samians, nobly hazarded their own safety in defence of their injured brethren. The Aleuadæ, whose irresponsible dominion still held down Thessaly, were not ashamed to welcome the invader in spite of the wishes of the people; while the men of Phocis sternly abided the first shock of the storm.[15] Argos, but yesterday widowed of her bravery by the ferocious vengeance of Lacedæmon, was wholly unable to render help; but all her kindred cities, Trœzen, Hermione, Phlius, and Corinth, sent their contingents to Artemisium and Thermopylæ; and Megara,[16] Sicyon,[17] and Miletus, whose principles were still more popular and commercial, rivalled their exertions. Thebes preferred the friendship of Persia to that of Greece, and, through her predominant influence, held back the other towns of Bœotia, with the sole exception of the Platæans, who were neither to be cajoled nor overawed. In after times, the Thebans deprecated the reproach of this perfidy by pleading the misgovernment under which their country then groaned.[18] The Arcadians, whose Pelasgic simplicity and social freedom had never been trampled down, promptly and unanimously took their fitting post.[19] Ægina, still bleeding from internal wounds, was too exhausted to resist during the first campaign;[20] but she made amends

[15] Herodotus, Lib. VII. cap. 172; Lib. VIII. cap. 30.

[16] Wachsmuth, § 35–39; Müller, Dorians, Lib. I. cap. 9, § 1.

[17] Pausanias, Lib. IX. cap. 62.

[18] Thucydides, Lib. III. cap.62.

[19] Herodotus, Lib. VIII. cap. 72.

[20] It was but a short time before that Nicodromus and seven hundred of the popular party in Ægina had been cut off in an unsuccessful attempt at revolution.—Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 91.

ere the war was over;[21] and the names of her sons who fell at Salamis were engraven on the national offerings. CHAP. IV.

Abandonment of Athens.

Liberty was still immature. All had not come to the same understanding of its culture; and there were old jealousies[22] and distrusts, not to be forgotten in a night. What marvel that the frontier few, on whom the locust cloud of Asia must first descend, should own that, unsustained and despairing of sufficient help in time, their hearts did sink within them? Though Greeks, they were but men. Yet, when before did men resolve and do as the great mass of the Greek people then? Not the three hundred and their hero-king dying at the Gates,—not Marathon, infinitely glorious though it was and will ever be, express the calm, deep, fixed purpose which inspired the whole Athenian people to forsake their immemorial citadel,[23] each man his dwelling-place and means of livelihood, all their familiar temples and forefathers' tombs, and resolutely abandon their autochthonic land to be the prey of the barbarian.[24]

Herein was victory,—the victory of the disciplined spirit of man over the nerveless clay that thralls him; of faith in everlasting good over the dark realities of sense and time. Let us die for Athens, if our deaths can save her; if not, let Athens be forsaken, so that our children may elsewhere live free!

[21] Herodotus, Lib. VIII. cap. 122.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Isocrates, Panath. 4.

[24] Herodotus, Lib. VIII. cap. 41.

CHAP. IV.

To the Persian it was a riddle;[25] to us it has a reading. The Greeks had for a certain time been governing themselves;[26] and imperfect as their attempts had frequently been, they were yet enough to give them this self-reliant fortitude,—this which alone could save them. After a prolonged struggle the invader was hurled back to his own land.[27] The great king saw the still myrmidon remnants of his once magnificent host defile through the streets of Sardis on their various ways to Egypt, Babylon, and Parthia; and as he gazed, wist not what power had baffled him. And Greece seemed more than ever free. Foreign lust of empire had done its worst against her industrial isles and city-states, and had failed ignominiously. What was there now to fear? So felt old Greece, tumultuous with joy at the scarce credible deliverance her children had wrought out for her.

Return of the people.

And the people were come back to the places where they had been brought up,[28] and amid their desolated homes raised high and long the hymn of victory. The shrine where yesterday the Nuban had stabled his war-steed was purified once more; and the wrecks of Hellespont were hung up as trophies of retribution.[29] Again the fields were sown; and the

[25] The mother of Xerxes, incredulous of his defeat, asked whether Attica had not been laid waste? Yes, she was told, but the rampart of Athenian citizens was impregnable.

[26] The Pisistratidæ were overthrown B.C. 510.

[27] Xerxes crossed the Hellespont in the spring of 480 B.C.; and Platæa and Mycale, which virtually settled the event, were fought on the 22d September, 479.

[28] Thucydides, Lib. I.

[29] Herod. Lib. IX. cap. 121.

trampled vines were raised up by the hand of the husbandman.[30] Again the hearth glowed brightly as the tale of war was told; and once again, within the late abandoned citadel, the prytanean fire — the visible ensign of the state's sovereign being[31]—burned clear and welcome-warm. Throughout all Greece the duties and labours of citizenship were resumed; the mother wept over her rescued child; and the widow's tears, though bitter, were still shed for one who perished at Platæa. It was hard to have struggled and suffered so, and to such an end, without glorying long—without being dazzled at the reflection of such deeds as had been done,—without national intoxication!

National intoxication.

And this danger was the more imminent from the very fact that the victory was emphatically the people's. Had mere generalship or diplomacy wrought out Greek deliverance, the few might have been corrupted by over praise, and, seeking to prolong their power, have earned for themselves destruction.[32] But that were a vulgar vanity, summarily curable. A far worse snare beset the path of Grecian freedom. Greece herself grew vain; her free, bold heart had caught the taint in the very core of its all-daring love of liberty, and in the very hour of triumph.

Ambition of Athens.

So long as Athens depended on her own

[30] Thirlwall, chap. 16.

[31] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 4.

[32] Such was the case of Pausanias, whose attempts to convert his power as generalissimo to despotism, are only interesting from their utter failure.

CHAP. IV.

resources, contented with the opulence her own industry earned, and emulous only of the fame of being the most highly civilised and free, her social and political constitution remained firm and vigorous, idolised by a people it had raised to unparalleled prosperity, and looked upon with envy and admiration by their neighbours. But Greece grew vain,—Athens most vain of all. From being the treasurer of the allies who had vanquished Persia, she aspired to becoming their tax-gatherer. The deference and gratitude they evinced towards her beguiled her into forgetfulness of the covenant that was made at the first between them. Their over-confidence taught her the evil sense of irresponsibility; until, half-deceiving, perhaps half self-deceived, she proclaimed herself entitled, not only to the hegemony of Ionia, but to the absolute empire of the sea.

The right of hegemony.

Hegemony was, in phrase, no novelty among the Greeks. Its primary object, as the term indicated, was leadership in war, and this necessarily implied to a certain extent a right in the pre-eminent to command, and a duty in the less powerful to obey. The parent state, as in the case of Corinth, claimed hegemony over the numerous city-states that acknowledged her maternity. The elder member of a particular race claimed military precedence among her neighbours and brethren: thus Argos tried, with more anxiety than skill, to perpetuate her ancient captaincy in Argolis; Elis, in like manner, over the country and mari-

time towns of Elea; and Thebes over Bœotia, where her supremacy grew so burdensome, that the free-spirited Platæans were driven to seek protection and help from Athens when they renounced the Bœotian league.[33] The nature and growth of Sparta's pretensions to leadership in Peloponnesus we shall presently see. Meanwhile, it may be generally observed that the existence of the various hegemonic leagues was grounded on the necessity, real or supposed, of mutual defence against external enemies:[34] and that whatever interference, or control, the guiding state assumed, it was, professedly at least, referable to the need of securing to all the benefit of this protection. The tone of command might be sometimes arrogant, or the requirements made unequal. But the object and the principle were well defined,[35] and left the honour of self-rule unwounded, — its vital energy unquelled. Some recognised authority was indispensable in the field; but in the *synedrion*, or federal council, wherein peace and war were determined upon, and the contingents settled that each state should yield, every member of the league appeared by its representatives.[36]

Hegemony at sea.

But the hegemony to which Athens now aspired was such only in its convenient name. Under Pisistratus a great portion of the Thracian Chersonesus had been reduced to subjection, and one or two minor acquisitions had been made before

[33] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 108.
[34] Hermann, § 34.
[35] Wachsmuth, § 26.
[36] Hermann, § 34.

CHAP. IV.

the Persian war. But the spirit of Athenian conquest for empire's sake dates from that eventful epoch. Themistocles was the first who conceived the notion of rendering Athens mistress of the sea. The maritime confederacy which, mainly by his energy and genius, she had called into existence, and led triumphantly till the ruins of Ladé were forgotten in the glories of Salamis, had probably produced results unforeseen; and on the flight of Xerxes, Athens found herself in a position so lofty and so tempting to her vanity, that we rather wonder at the moderation of her tone in at first claiming only the new rank of the hegemony at sea.

Maritime empire of Athens.

Corcyra, Corinth, and Ægina, were, previous to the invasion, little, if at all, her inferiors. But her unparalleled exertions, first for defence, and then for retribution, gave the pre-eminence to Athens. Themistocles was one of the few men who are competent to appreciate the impulse they have given to the destiny of their country long ere it is popularly understood. For the deliverance and the fame of his country, he had been the most equal to the emergency; unhappily for the eventual welfare of that country, he was now the most adequate to make brilliant, but perilous use of the opportunity which had arisen. "He was the first who ventured to tell the Athenians that they ought to assume the dominion of the sea, and who shewed them the way to achieve it."[37] Under various

[37] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 93.

pretences Themistocles contrived to keep together the allied armaments, and endeavoured to carry the war into Asia. The Ionic states entered into a new confederacy, of which Athens was the head, but by whose terms the independence of all was expressly guaranteed. Delos was chosen as the treasury of the confederates, and its temple as the place where their delegates should assemble. Athens rebuilt her ancient walls, extending their circuit so as to connect the ancient city with the harbour of Piræus; and as a significant memorial of the new destiny of the republic, and of the element whereon its sovereignty was to be reared, the seats in the assembly were turned from the Acropolis towards the sea. CHAP. IV.

Aristides and Themistocles.

Thus was the basis laid of that maritime empire, which, rapidly expanding by the victories of Cimon, soon after reached its zenith under Pericles. Though the name of Aristides is associated with the measure for removing the federal treasury from Delos, the whole tendency of his life and character was opposed to the policy of his daring rival. He loved glory less, and popular purity more. He feared the consequences of the national changes that Themistocles was hurrying on. His proposal, made after the battle of Platæa, that a national synedrion, or congress, should be permanently established to assemble there, and to take thought for the common weal,[38] had it been adopted, might

[38] Plutarch, in Vit. Aristid.

CHAP. IV.

have averted many of the evils that ensued. For Athens his hope lay at home,—in the virtue of the people themselves, not the number of provinces they could count beyond the sea. Ascendancy, predominance, power, were the day-dreams of Themistocles; popular justice, industry, self-respect, the all-engrossing aims of Aristides' counsel. Was it strange that the promiseful policy of the former found preference in the dazzled eyes of the many, and that they soon began to look upon as enemies all who thwarted their desires of empire? To accomplish these desires, a prolongation of the war, and the permanent maintenance of vast armaments, were necessary.

Effects of a war policy.

Sparta had retired in 477 B.C. from the confederacy, and made a separate peace with Persia. Sympathy and gratitude held the minor states longer upon terms of amity with Athens. But, as years rolled on, they naturally grew weary of exertions which had ceased to be necessary for any other purpose than the aggrandisement of Athens. Andros, Paros, and others of the lesser states, desired to follow the example of Lacedæmon, but found that they were no longer at liberty to do so. A general armistice having been proclaimed, the exhausted allies deemed that now at length they might return to the enjoyment of their primary peace and independence. But the power of empire had been held too long to be readily given up; and sooner than surrender it, any mask, however false, would cheerfully be worn, or, if necessary, none.

Permanent contributions of ships and money were declared by Athens to be indispensable to the maintenance of a great system of national defence.[39] Naxos, refusing to comply, was compelled by arms; and was the first that fell from the rank of an ally into that of a conquered tributary; and, as the turn of each came, they were nearly all treated in like manner.[40] "Some of them were imprudent enough to seek ease from their burdens by sacrificing their strength, and offered to commute personal service in the endless expeditions to which they were summoned, for stated payments of money: but the states, which thus were exempted from keeping up a naval force of their own, were ever after exposed, without any means of defence, to the growing demands of the Athenians, and thus dearly purchased temporary relief."[41] The Samians yielded their ships of war, while the brave Chians adhered to the costly alternative of furnishing a separate squadron manned and officered by their own people, and they seem to have fared better in consequence.

Coercion and confiscation.

The progress of usurpation henceforth grew rapid. Lemnos and Imbrus, where, under the plea of expelling the Persians, Athenian garrisons had been placed, were now declared to be integral provinces of the republic. Scyros was voted pira-

[39] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 96. The first year's contributions are variously estimated at from 86,520*l.* to 94,875*l.*

[40] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 98.

[41] Wachsmuth, Vol. II. § 58.

CHAP. IV.

tical, and its inhabitants sentenced to disfranchisement. Thasos was subdued by Cimon, and the towns of Eion and Amphipolis, on the neighbouring coast, by the same victorious general. The country around the mouth of the Strymon also was invaded, but the expedition failed. In Eubœa, those who were foremost in resisting Athenian oppression were voted aristocratic traitors, and being defeated, after a sanguinary struggle, their lands were divided into democratic lots, to a considerable portion of which the Athenians did not scruple to prefer irresistible claims.[42] We read, moreover, of military colonies being subsequently sent thither, as well as to several other of the insubordinate allies, whose confiscated lands were parcelled out in grants to the intruders.[43] Mitylene, Potidæa, Sinope, Amisus, Colophon, Melos, Scione, and Delos, were successively found guilty of certain acts of contumacy; and, within a few years from the defeat of Xerxes, they were all in effect reduced to a state of political vassalage.

Discontent of the allies.

The terms and forms of the old hegemony were preserved for some time, it is true; but the power of Athens was such in fact no longer. Hegemony, in the days of its legitimate use and popularity, among the Greeks implied neither centralisation of authority, nor assimilation of domestic institutions. When, for objects strictly national and reciprocal, there were substituted aims palpably and avowedly of selfish metropolitan aggrandisement,

[42] Diodorus, Lib. XII. cap. 5; Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 114.

[43] Thirlwall, Vol. III. chap. 18.

the vital principle of Greek federalism lost its elasticity, its healthful spirit, and its self-sustaining power. The lesser states could not but feel themselves less respected — could not but fall in their own esteem. Some of them sank down into a contented dependency, which, in truth, presented many alluring compensations of security and domestic peace. Others, like the energetic Mitylenеans, mourned silently their political humiliation, and held their resentful breath until a time should come for resuming all they had reluctantly yielded, and for proclaiming, as they did by their ambassadors in the presence of the assembled states at Olympia (in 428 B.C.), that their long-deferred revolt was no treacherous breach of faith with Athens, but warrantable alike by "honesty and justice." For they could, with undoubted truth, declare, that "they had originally entered into the confederacy, not for the purpose of enslaving Greece to the Athenians, but of delivering Greece, by their help, from vassalage to the Medes; — that so long as the Athenians led them as equals, they had followed them with hearty good-will, but that, when called on to aid in the subjugation of the other allies, their confidence gave way; —that, as their brethren were in turn subdued, they trembled for themselves; —that, having still the protection of their own domestic institutions uninfringed, they were unwilling to withdraw their contingent, but that their feelings were no longer the same;

Justice of their reproaches.

CHAP. IV.

and that it was, for some time, more from fear than love they had kept upon terms with Athens."[44]

Assimilation.

Of the incidents and results of provincial subjugation, so far as they concern the fate of the despoiled, we speak not here. It is, however, requisite to remark, that local freedom was, in some respects, increased, rather than diminished, by the ascendancy of the Athenians. When any attempt was made to disown their imperious protection, it was usually denounced as a plot of the oligarchs, requiring their prompt interposition to vindicate the rights of the many, and to chastise the oppressive few. Their policy was selfish and eventually suicidal; but they were too quicksighted not to discern how much their own internal system of rule might be strengthened by disseminating their principles wherever the opportunity presented itself. The more reflecting of their statesmen, moreover, may not have been unmindful that the chief compensation they could render to those who had been half-tricked, half-trampled into annexation, was the extinction of local abuses and oppressions. Petty obstacles to intercourse were in all likelihood removed, and whatever grudging remnants of monopoly still lingered in particular places were probably overthrown.

Rights of Athenian citizenship.

The avenues, moreover, were gradually thrown open to the acquisition of the rights of Athenian citizenship; and where, as in Samos and Ægina, and elsewhere, rival manufactures were found, it is

[44] Thucydides, Lib. III. cap. 10–12.

but justice to remember that no attempt was made to depress or hamper them. The power to do so obviously existed, and pretences are seldom difficult to find; but in the worst scenes of their ambition, the Athenians seem to have anticipated the precept of our own illustrious statesman, "Let your speculations be splendid."[45]

No compensation.

The desire of Athens was not the sordid lust of mere territorial acquisition. Her visions were of Athenian expansion and absorption — of morally and politically rendering all Greece Athenian. Experience soon disenchanted her boldest and ablest men in this respect, though for many generations it was impossible to dispel the popular illusion. Its prevalence naturally aided in securing the uninterrupted liberty of trade, and contributed possibly, here and there, to its more thorough and complete emancipation. It is rather to be taken as evidence of the healthful state of things previously subsisting, than any cause of general doubt upon the subject, that no effort is traceable in the Greek historians to set such advantages as counter-weights in the scale against the injuries and affronts inflicted by the system out of which they had sprung. It was doubtless perceived that if general traffic gained in freedom, local industry lost in content, tranquillity, and spirit. But even had the benefits to commerce been greater than there is any reason to suppose they were, they could afford no compen-

[45] Edmund Burke.

CHAP. IV.

sation to the Greeks for the humiliations whereby they were accompanied, and which wounded the public mind "in the most sensitive part."[46] From their nature they must, in a great degree, have been but locally appreciable, while the insults and losses of political subjugation were universal, and every where sought, as they every where proffered, sympathy in hatred and in hopes of vengeance. These for a time, indeed, were vain; and every revolt that was crushed rendered Athens more supercilious and indifferent to the ill-will thus cherished against her; yet it may be truly said, that not until she had proved every link of the chain of wrong, was it found strong enough to drag her down to ruin.

Naval might of Athens.

Meanwhile, however, the sense of overwhelming power deferred all attempts at general mutiny. Sixty Athenian triremes cruised about the Grecian seas the whole year round; and the citizens did duty on board by rotation. The dismayed allies beheld them every where, and trembled at the rapidity of their movements, with emotions not far removed from superstition.[47] Popular forms became almost universal among the states; but their early pride was gone; the root of their liberty was dead.

And what effect did all this work upon the Athenians themselves? In a variety of ways the most injurious. They daily undertook to act in a capacity of which Solon and Clisthenes had not dreamed,

[46] Wachsmuth, Vol. II. § 58. [47] Ibid.

which Aristides had foreseen and vainly striven to avert—in that of irresponsible masters. It seems as though it were an inevitable consequence of the usurpation of power by one state over another, that the wider the governing class and the more numerous the hands engaged in the work of misrule, the greater is its tendency to become corrupting and corrupt. We read occasionally of a wise or kindly autocrat, sometimes of a considerate and enlightened oligarchy, holding other lands than their own in absolute subjection; but never do we hear of a free people assuming unjust or arbitrary power with honour, safety, or eventual advantage, either to their subjects or themselves.

Insolence of their administration.

In the heart of the Athenian people the sense of their actual strength and present impunity naturally begot a domineering and insolent pride that would brook neither reproof nor expostulation. Pericles well understood this feeling, when, by a lofty stroke of flattery, he introduced the decree by which, in the disposal of the (so-called) common fund of the confederacy, the Athenian assembly declared themselves accountable to none. Day by day as this immoral notion grew, the tone of their provincial administration waxed more overbearing and intolerant. Force often resorted to successfully is soon preferred to all other means of deciding controversies. The peaceful settlement of discontents gave them no new emotion of avarice or vanity;—coercive measures towards insurgents ministered but too effectively to both.

CHAP. IV.

Vanity and excitement.

Athens was drunk with power. The delirious excitement, tasted once, was not to be relinquished; the thirst of ascendancy and pre-eminence became habitual, and at any cost it would be gratified. The stimulants were sometimes changed, but their effects on the popular brain and heart were much the same. National vanity is, indeed, a versatile passion. Themistocles fed it with the idea of maritime ascendancy, and this not as attainable by mere superiority of seamanship, or wiser ways of trade, which would have necessarily been the growth of time and the subject of competition, but by such a combination of fraud and force as should first place the fleets of the minor states, on one pretext or other, under the lead of Athenians, and then let them separate if they dared.

As against Persia the combination of forces was plausible and just; but peace came, and the ships of the confederates returned not to their respective havens. Athens wanted them still. Their crews might share with hers the common triumph if they would—in that respect she scorned to be illiberal—but not otherwise; their term of alliance was not ended yet, there was still common work to do. And this work was never finished till Greece was undone. Gradually the allied armaments became an Athenian fleet, officered, not exclusively but distinctively, by Attic citizens, receiving orders, censures, and rewards from that memorable place of assembly, whence the vessels in the Piræus could be always seen.

Pericles suggested a new form of popular excitement. He was brave, but, from policy, averse to war. He was the friend of Phidias, and loved art. The allied treasury was full, and there were more triremes than enough already in Munychia and Piræus. The city which was the centre of such a confederacy ought to look the metropolis; Athens should be glorious as well as the Athenians. With such popularity as he possessed, with such resources at his disposal, and with one so fitted to be constituted "superintendant of public works," the temptation was irresistible. Phidias was appointed; and those stupendous works began, whose unrivalled lustre dazzled every eye that was permitted to behold them, and whose very ruins fill us with wonder and delight.

Public edifices.

Every portion of the aspiring city was adorned with buildings of varied form and structure, suitable to the endless objects of amusement, business, education, and worship, which divided the time of the community; and towering above all rose the citadel-shrine of Athenè, beside whose guardian image stood the Palace of the Treasury and the Temple of Erechtheus. The Temple of Unwinged Victory, also, was there, opposite the Picture Gallery; and between them was the matchless Propylæa, or entrance-gate, to which a magnificent flight of steps, fit for the multitudinous processions that were wont to throng them, wound upwards from the underlying city. How unspeakable must have been the sense of power, and with what ecstasy of pride must

CHAP. IV.

these sumptuous edifices have been viewed by the self-idolatrous crowd, who saw them rise with magical rapidity around them. How sorrowfully one listens to the voice, as of contrite abasement, which seems to echo through their vacant ruins,—the jewelled leper's cry,—"Unclean! unclean!" Yet we cannot, as true men, and loyal to the immutable rights of human freedom, shrink from pronouncing the inexorable verdict, that it had been better such a combination of art, if there were no other means of producing it than those which were there and then employed, had never been. Not that we love art less, but that we love right more. Art is indeed inestimably good; but even the inestimable may be bought too dear. The ambition of becoming the *atelier* of the world was so brilliant and noble, that it is impossible to repress the sympathy and admiration it kindles in one's bosom. Unhappily, however, we are forced to remember, that with Athens this ambition was inseparably interwoven with another and very different one, that, namely, of becoming the world's show-room. From which of the two the multitude derived most satisfaction it is not difficult to conjecture. Be this, however, as it may, it is obvious that, in departing from the path of free and fair competition, even though in favour of the arts, Pericles was an evil counsellor and guide. Had Athenian toil, sustained by Athenian taste and opulence, rendered the city of Minerva the free home of Grecian art, so that the Corinthian or the Æginetan sculptor

would have come thither as to the highest school of study, or as the provincial athlete sought to contend for the chief of combat-crowns before all Greece assembled at Olympia,—envy would have had no permanent place, and the architectural beauty of Athens had not been inseparably associated with the memory of wrong.

Taunt of Pericles.

At the outset of these undertakings Pericles was encountered by some whispers of popular conscience. The scale on which one of the great buildings was planned created a momentary misgiving that the cost would be too large. The minister knew well the chord to touch, and answered haughtily, "Let the building be finished, and I will have it inscribed with *my* name instead of that of the people of Athens, if when they see it complete they will not pay for it." The threat of paying for it himself was idle, for Pericles was a man of very moderate fortune; but popular vanity was stung by the sneer into blind forgetfulness, and the work went on.

The ambition of becoming the metropolis of the Ionic states, founded on the claims of Athens to pre-eminent valour, wisdom, and worth, was cheerfully recognised. Many advantages resulted naturally from the enjoyment of so distinguished a presidency, the just recompense of her peculiar services. Great confidence, moreover, as we have seen, was placed in her integrity as guardian of the common interest; great, therefore, was her folly in ascribing this confidence to a sense of submission in her allies, and greater still her crime in usurping

CHAP. IV.

and appropriating to her own individual adornment those funds which could never have come into her hands save in the capacity of a national trustee.

The fortifications.

It were hard to blame the anxiety shewn by successive administrations to perfect the defences of the arsenal and docks, on both of which vast sums were not only expended originally, but the maintenance of which was an annual source of very considerable outlay.[48] We cannot help doubting the policy, however, of the massive fortifications with which the capital was surrounded. Their whole history reads ominously. Built in defiance of Sparta, they were doomed to be occupied within a few years after their construction by a Spartan garrison; and, having been demolished by the same jealous power, they were subsequently rebuilt with the help of a donation from Persia.[49] What an epitome of national infatuation is here! Yet the world is apparently not grown wiser. Huge walls are still in building for defence, as if they had not betrayed every people who confided in them.

Cost of the buildings.

The sums expended in such buildings must have been great. What, then, shall we say of the forest of temples, theatres, gymnasia, with their accompaniments of altars, fountains, baths, and the embellishments of statuary and painting? The Propylæa, or entrance to the Acropolis, cost, alone, 2012 talents—nearly half a million sterling.[50] From the *synteleia*, or fund of the allies, little short

[48] Böckh, Book II. § 10.
[49] Xenophon, Hellen. IV. § 12.
[50] Böckh, Book II. § 10.

of a million was taken by Pericles, chiefly for architectural purposes; and this was but one item of expense under one minister. We know that among the Greeks high bare walls, with a row of columns outside, did not answer the description of a fine public building. The edifice, however costly in structure, was but the casket which contained the gems; and the Athenians deemed their places of worship or amusement unfit to be seen by the public until every suitable space was filled with sculpture in ivory, gold, or marble, and every interval clothed with design and colour. The mere utensils of the shrines were objects of elaborate workmanship and were formed of rare materials. The ornaments removable in case of need from the statue of Athenè were alone estimated at forty talents of gold;[51] the image itself was regarded as the masterpiece of Phidias, and cost more than an entire year's contribution of the allies.[52]

The year in which the Propylæa was finished the Peloponnesian war began.[53]

Demand for labour.

Industrially, the effects of this system were at first apparent chiefly in the rapid increase of employment. Artificers of all degrees of skill migrated to Athens from the neighbouring cities, allured by the advanced wages which they expected there; and a decided impetus must have been given to mechanical pursuits also among the native popu-

[51] Thucydides, Lib. II. cap. 13.

[52] Jacob, Enquiry into the Production and Consumption of the Precious Metals, Book I. § 19.

[53] Müller, History of the Literature of Ancient Greece, chap. xix. p. 266.

CHAP. IV.

lation. It was a natural developement of the Greek temperament, that when a great public work was once begun, its completion should be hastened forwards as rapidly as possible, regardless of the enhanced cost thereby incurred. The effect on wages must have often, therefore, been marked and sudden. A multitude of persons were necessarily added to the town population, all of them dependent upon the continuance of work for daily maintenance.[54] It is indicative of a very sound fiscal system, that under these circumstances we hear nothing of new laws for supplying the demand for food. The domestic produce was limited, and already insufficient. What, then, must have occurred when an addition was rapidly made to the population, had foreign importations not been free? In one shape or other the want would have made itself peremptorily heard. All went well and prosperously, however; prices indeed rose, but gradually; house-rent and luxuries of many sorts grew dear, but the prime necessaries of life remained low; and, though an epicure paid for his enjoyments exorbitantly,[55] a working man and his family could, it is supposed, have supported themselves well on less than forty pounds a-year.

Precarious nature of the demand.

Nevertheless, it is clear that, in so far as prices had been artificially stimulated by an augmented demand for labour and advance in wages, any sudden cessation of employment became a serious

[54] Thirlwall, chap. 18.

[55] Plutarch, de Animæ Tranquillitate.

source of domestic danger; and the longer the difficulty was postponed, the more aggravated it must be.

Amusements for the people.

It was part of the policy of Pericles to provide liberally for the amusement of the people. To this end festivals of various kinds—public games and spectacles,—and, above all, theatrical entertainments, were systematically adopted among the permanent charges to which the funds of the government were properly applicable. These were not made by him the pretexts for withholding more substantial benefits. These he thought also should be done, though the others were not left undone. The great excess to which they were afterwards carried has nothing to do with the question whether their aim was not good, and their moderate and legitimate use capable of rendering many services to civilisation.

Fees to the dicasts and ecclesiasts.

To the same period is assignable the introduction of the system of fees to every citizen who acted on a jury; a precedent soon followed by payments to every one who attended the Assembly. Contemporaneously, also, we find the systematic increase of public banquets ostensibly given in honour of the gods, but in reality to aid the poorer possessors of the rights of legislative sovereignty in maintaining themselves. The worst evils produced by these alterations in the judicial and legislative system were those which they slowly and incurably wrought upon the moral and industrial habits of

CHAP. IV.

the people. The waste of revenue they entailed seems to have been generally rather overrated.[56]

Had all these items of casual or permanent expenditure been charged to the account of the taxes paid by the community who enjoyed the benefits of them, a natural check would have always existed on their tendency to excess; and if in thoughtless moments the mere panders to the caprice of the multitude had succeeded in beguiling them into improvident outlay, they would hardly have escaped the keen reproaches of all classes when the honey-cup was drained, and the bitter cost was demanded in vainly postponed privations. The true evil lay in the absence of this check, and the consequent absence of all dread of responsibility. The Athenians paid for their pleasures and their splendid banquets to a great extent out of the tributes of the dependent states. Pericles himself only raised the tribute by a small amount, but his successors were forced to augment it to a far greater extent, in order to keep up his profuse expenditure. During his administration, indeed, the synteleia did not exceed 150,000*l.*; and on the eve of the war he stated that there were nearly 1,500,000*l.* in the treasury. But within the space of three years the whole of these accumulations were dissipated in armaments by sea and land.[57]

Capability of Pericles.

Pericles did not live to see the trees of his planting stimulated to over-blossom by those who

[56] Thirlwall, chap. 18.

[57] Thucydides, Lib. II. cap. 13.

availed themselves of them but for selfish profit or popularity, and so insured their premature decay. And for what he may not have anticipated, even as a contingency, it seems unjust to hold him answerable. With the latest and best of modern historians of Greece, we may venture to dissent from the furious philippic of Böckh, who does not scruple to attribute all his measures to a reckless love of popularity and power,—considering it obvious that he must have foreseen their consequences, to which he attributes nearly all the vices and follies of the latter days of the republic.[58] But whether he foresaw such of them as to us seem most obvious and inevitable, or deceived himself with vague ideas of resources in reserve, which trade or conquest were to make available in time, appears questionable.[59] At length the crisis came; the patience of many of the provinces was worn out, and more than one revolted. At the same moment popular discontent began to shew itself at home, and an inquiry into the state of the revenue was called for. It is not improbable that the latter was caused by some cessation of expenditure, which, throwing many out of work, offered a pretext to the demagogues to assail the so-long-popular minister. Were the surplus funds of the synteleia exhausted, then? Or were there hidden malversations in the expenditure? All is wrapt in darkness and uncer-

[58] See Thirlwall's remonstrance (Hist. Vol. III. page 67, note) against the eloquent philippic of Böckh against Pericles' administration, Book III. § 13.

[59] Thirlwall, ibid.

CHAP. IV.

tainty; we only hear, with grief, a base cry raised against Phidias; we see him flung into a prison; the tottering minister daring not to interpose between that fearfullest of all created things,—a suspecting mob and the object of their suspicion. From his prison Phidias goes forth to gaze upon the fatal glories of his workmanship no more. They had bid him rear a palace-home for art and freedom, and he found in it a grave for himself and them! He was not the first victim of popular rage at Athens; and the catalogue was soon a long one.

Pericles adopts the counsel of Alcibiades.

And Pericles set about preparing his financial statement for the expectant public. He knew better, probably, than any other man how hopeless were any of the ordinary expedients: he saw the few hard things that might be done, and the thousand plausible things that *by him* could not be done, for his prime of life was passed, and he began to think how his name should be written in the page of history. It is only just to say, that from his honourable rivals for power in the assembly he does not seem to have incurred vexatious opposition; and this tends to confirm a surmise that it was a danger more perilous and more difficult to deal with,—such as a paralysis of the industrial action of the state,—that sat heavily on his mind. While he revolved these arduous meditations, the impetuous presumption of one of those, unluckily, whom he advised with determined his course of proceeding. Alcibiades was by many years the junior, and in many respects the inferior, of Pericles.

Descended from one of the oldest families of the nobility, and heir to an ample fortune, he was one of those ill-constituted beings who think the value of such gifts only to be relished when others can be painfully reminded of the want of them. Haughty, rash, self-confident, and unscrupulous, he was, nevertheless, popular at the outset of his career. Perhaps he had for the moment more hold over the crowd, because he had in some respect more in common with them. An excessive passion for horses had arisen in Attica; men of high rank trained them for the games; and many were impoverished by keeping them, as is recorded by several ancient writers, though others were enriched by the same means.[60] Alcibiades indulged freely in this amusement, entered his horses for the most celebrated races, and was much elated when he won.[61] When, upon one occasion, he was seeking a high military command he boastfully reminded his countrymen of the *éclat* of his appearance at the Olympic games, where he bore away several of the racing prizes. Though little given to religious observances, he well knew how to appeal to the fanaticism of the multitude, and having once, in a reckless mood, provoked the censure of the pious, he strove to make amends, subsequently, by a show of zeal which his enemies (and he had many) alleged was insincere. His first essay in public

[60] Böckh, Econ. Ath. Book I. § 14.

[61] Thucydides, Lib. VI. cap. 16.

CHAP. IV.

administration was in Sicily, where he was sent with older and better men. His headlong violence and ill-temper contributed not a little to embroil the affairs of that country; and, when he could not force those who had sent him thither into adopting his improvident and unreasonable views, he changed sides, espoused a wholly different policy, and sought nothing, thenceforth, so intently as to thwart and injure those who had first employed him. Such was the man by whom, in his difficulties, Pericles is said to have been influenced, and who counselled him to divert attention from the real evil by setting up new objects of interest. A curious dialogue is given by Xenophon, supposed to have taken place on another occasion between them, in which Alcibiades is made to puzzle Pericles as to whose will should govern in the state — that of the many or the few; and, while the veteran statesman owns the apparent contradictions and incongruities into which his own honest convictions would lead him, the whole object of Alcibiades seems to be to shew how nimbly he can turn round in argument, and with what levity he regards the most perplexing difficulties of state.[62] We can hardly believe that a politician like Pericles had any thing of value to learn from his inexperienced and giddy associate. Perhaps Alcibiades knew too much of his policy, and he wished to humour him with the credit of having given the suggestion

[62] Memorab. Socrat. I. 2.

whereon he was about to act. Perhaps he saw that the current had set in in the direction Alcibiades pointed, and that, if resisted, it would sever him from one whose talents and resources he dared not to despise, and over whom he may have felt that no ties of private friendship would have any hold. Whatever the determining considerations were, Pericles resolved to take his final stand upon the existing system, and to give no explanations to those who called for financial reform. If the honour of the country was offended, he was ready to vindicate it. If in a matter of small moment, he was the more tenacious of the national dignity, lest an impression should get abroad that they feared to go to war.[63] Nor was this a random vaunt; its practical meaning was well understood and appreciated. A decree of non-intercourse had a short time before been launched against the revolted Megaræans. This amounted to a strict blockade, for they were denied admission to the fairs and markets of Attica: at that period no state could export its products, unless submissive to the rulers of the sea; and on their good-will and pleasure it depended whether the surplus produce of these states could be exported or not.[64] The sufferers invoked the interposition of Sparta, from whom envoys were sent to expostulate with the Athenians. They urged the grievances, also, of the minor states, who had in truth abundant reason

[63] Thucydides, Lib. I. c. 139, 140.

[64] De Rep. Ath. II. 3, 11.

CHAP. IV.

to complain, but concerning whom Sparta, in all likelihood, would have never sent an embassy if her own aim had not been to provoke a war, and had there not been some suspicion that Athens was reluctant just then to embark in one. When Pericles, therefore, in his accustomed tone of calm self-reliance, proposed that no relaxation of severity should be conceded to the rebellious tributaries, he at once complied with the promptings of the petulant and haughty Alcibiades, and rallied the drooping confidence of the many who had wavered in their fidelity towards him only because he seemed for a moment weak and in perplexity. He proposed no retrenchment of expense, he asked no self-denial; all was sound and firm, he said, and transient ills would, as they had often done, pass of themselves away. Temporary confidence and good humour revived at his familiar bidding, and, before the illusion was dissipated, all Greece was wrapt in the flames of the Peloponnesian war.[65]

The age of Pericles.

The interval that elapsed between the termination of the struggle against Persia, and the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war, was the noon of Attic splendour. It is called the age of Pericles—the age of Phidias; its duration being, for the greater part, co-extensive with the administration of the great statesman, and with the popularity of the still greater artist. But, save in a chronological sense, these epithets are rather calculated to mislead.

[65] Plutarch, in Vit. Per.

The political and social impetus of the time had been given before Pericles acquired any thing like ascendancy; and his great merit lay in directing its impetuosity, and disarming its anger; in guiding its energy, and calming its perilous excitability. All we know of the man leads to the conviction that he sympathised but little with the wild passion for aggrandisement that possessed the Athenian multitude. He had the faculty, it is true, which is the peculiar gift of genius, of divining what the mass would have, of anticipating their will, and of realising, in form and speech, what they incoherently dreamed of. And seeing, possibly, that the current was too strong to be resisted, he committed his fame to its force, and contrived that his own ensign should be borne aloft on its turbulent bosom.

Foresight of Pericles.

But Pericles was not deceived as to the illusory nature of his country's ambition.[66] He saw that, soon or late, the people must be wakened from their dream of empire; and, it is not impossible, that among the unavowed motives that rendered him apparently so passive at the approach of the Peloponnesian war, and disinclined him to attempt to avert it, may have been the conviction that the struggle was inevitable, and that the sooner it came the better. To suppose that he counted upon the result which followed, were to misapprehend the whole being of the man. The ruin and shame which it brought, first to Athens, and eventually to all Greece, he recked not of; nor in this is he

[66] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 144.

CHAP. IV.

blame-worthy, for we can hardly believe that, had Pericles lived, and continued to hold power, the complicated tissue of error and obstinacy, into which his incompetent successors plunged, would ever have been committed. The gloom that overspread his latter days, even had it been wholly political, may be sufficiently accounted for by his foresight of the many humiliations which no warning could make Athenian vanity apprehend. But the insane expeditions to Sicily, and the recklessness that staked and lost all means of ordinary defence at Ægos-potamos, are unlike all the measures of the celebrated statesman, who never left himself without resources.

Phidias.

As fallacious is it to call this memorable period the age of Phidias, and to imagine that the immortal calm, which is the predominant characteristic of his works, was the impression of the time. The seeming parallel between him and Pericles has no doubt suggested the fond conceit, and led to the popular flattery, that, as the great minister was the charmed tongue of the multitude, so the great artist was their magic tool. But art is no subtle amalgam of esoteric wisdom and popular flattery, as the best of statecraft, such as that of Pericles, must necessarily be. How much of his own great spirit Phidias impressed upon his countrymen is another question; but what could they tell him? He was, indeed, to them a soul, and, through the instrumentality of their ambition of celebrity, and willingness to work and pay for whatsoever pro-

mised to procure it for them,—he realised many of his glorious ideas in outward form. But further than this what had he to do with them, save to perish in their hands, as the penalty of his transcendant height above them?

The age of Phidias.

As for the time, did it not prove itself unworthy of the man,—mournfully incapable of appreciating the value of him? Surely of all generations, that which history brands with the shame of his death is the one least deserving of being associated in his glory. Of them, what shall we say? The less that is pharisaic or reproachful, probably the better. "Had we a Phidias?"—alas! these idle self-complacencies have a miserable sound. A Phidias we have not; but those we have—how do we treat them? If the imprudent contrast is provoked, what does it come to? The Greeks at least honoured him long years, and heaped distinctions and emoluments upon him; then, in horrible caprice, they flung him down, and let him perish in a prison. We, with more regard to the coherencies of decency, never evince, by any national or popular act worthy of the name, that we are conscious of the great and glorious spirits that have been and that are amongst us, or of our obligations and our duties towards them. Phidias worked not to please his own generation, but to teach all times, and as was his aim so should his honour be. When his work was done, and others caught up the chisel, he had dropped in death, the lowering influence of the desire to win mere popularity soon

CHAP. IV.

appeared. Every successive school became more literal, and addressed its appeals more to the senses. In other words, art gradually taught less, and tried to amuse more.

Effects of the misapplication of the revenue.

The ostentatious misappropriation of the federal revenues, not to works of art alone, but to many other branches of a prodigal system of expenditure, cost Athens dear. It inevitably led, when that fountain of spoil was suddenly closed, to summary measures of direct taxation, destructive alike of capital and enterprise. But as these evils, in the aggravated form which they at first assumed, are inextricably mingled with the misfortunes of the Peloponnesian war, they are not dwelt on here. Attic industry revived on the return of peace; and opportunities were thus afforded of reverting to sound principles of economic and political rule. How much of national strength and prosperity, and of the means of individual comfort and happiness, Athens still continued to enjoy, we shall endeavour to see.

Meanwhile, let us turn our eyes for a brief interval to the great enemy of popular freedom and industry in Greece,—Lacedæmon.

CHAPTER V.

THE ENEMIES OF INDUSTRY AND FREEDOM AMONG THE GREEKS THEMSELVES.

"Of the peculiar privileges of the Spartans, that which they valued most was their exemption from industrial labour. Their law forbade their following any trade or business. The helots tilled their lands, and were accountable for the produce. When unemployed in war, their time was spent in hunting, and other bodily exercises,—in putting the young men through their drill, and in hearing the old men talk. A Spartan who once heard at Athens a person condemned for having no useful avocation deplored that any one should be so used for keeping up the dignity of his station;—so utterly did they despise pursuits of commerce and manufacture."[1]

A DISPUTE between Epidamnus and Corcyra, into which several of the second-rate powers were drawn, was the ostensible cause of the Peloponnesian war. The Spartans and Athenians stood aloof for a time; but when the Corcyræans appealed to the pride of the latter as "their only superiors at sea,"[2] and to their sympathy as a free commercial people whom the Doric allies of Epidamnus would destroy, they espoused what seemed the weaker side, and by their preponderating aid soon turned the

[1] Plutarch, in Vit. Lycurg.

[2] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 15.

CHAP. V.

scale. Lacedæmon's long accumulating hate and jealousy could thenceforth be no more concealed; and, after certain fruitless parleyings and negotiations, the fatal strife began. All Greece was rent in twain during the struggle, and shared its desolating effects; but its true origin and motives lay deeper far than any transient occasion of ill-will between the leading combatants; and that which rendered their collision sooner or later unavoidable, would suffer neither of them to give way "until they had ground one another to dust."[3]

Real causes of the Peloponnesian war.

It was the long-restrained outburst of an antagonism the most vivid that the world had ever seen. The Doric system was the pointed antithesis of the Ionic in every feature; nor were traditional enmities wanting. Pelasgic elements had, as we have before observed, been largely interfused with the not uncongenial enterprise and freedom of the Ionians, who strove to obliterate all invidious recollections, and to persuade themselves of the indigenous unity of that which was in truth a happily blended race.[4] Not so their exclusive rivals. Wherever Doric institutions were planted, and so long as they retained their vigour, the descendants of the primary inhabitants of the land were treated with oppression and contumely. Disheartened and down-trodden, they ceased to use the Pelasgic name. Nevertheless, it was true, and the circumstance did not escape the observation of the re-

[3] Thirlwall, chap. 16, p. 373.

[4] Isocrates, Panath. § 17; Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 2.

flective and sentiment-loving Greeks, that, from the manner in which the states were divided in the Peloponnesian war, and still more from the leaders under whom they were marshalled, the ancient feud of vanquished and victorious races was, after the lapse of several centuries, in some degree resumed. Hostility of race, though kept alive as a popular sentiment, was not indeed the governing impulse, or exciting cause of mutual antipathy; for time had unfolded the antagonist Doric and Ionic systems, and revealed innumerable sources of enmity and repulsion whereof a primitive age had not dreamed. CHAP. V.

Antagonism of the Doric and Ionic systems.

Sparta had long been the acknowledged head of those states that cherished the maxims and habits distinctive of the one; and Athens, from the days of Themistocles, had become the chief of all who adhered to the other. The ambition of both led them to aspire to predominant influence in Greece, and the madness of their rivalry would in any case, perhaps, have led to hostility between them. But when we call to mind the opposition of their mutually obnoxious and contemned ideas, habits, manners, customs, occupations, and remember the incessant efforts made by both at political propagandism,[5] our wonder ceases, not at the infatuation of their internecine hate, but at the ruin, loss, and misery which it caused.

To form any just conception of the intensity of

[5] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. VII. § 7.

CHAP. V.

this antagonism between Sparta and Athens, it is necessary to recall some of their respective peculiarities, and to compare the leading features of their social and political condition.

Territories of Sparta.

The territorial pre-eminence of the Spartans in Peloponnesus had been early acquired. Laconia was their first important conquest. Its fields were partitioned into lots of equal size, which were neither to be diminished by incumbrance or sale, nor increased save by inheritance or marriage. Other provinces were subsequently added to their encroaching empire,[6]—that of Messenia in particular, whose plains were deemed the most fruitful in Greece,[7] and the brave defence made by whose inhabitants drew down on their descendants those cruel penalties that throughout time have made "the helot's fate" a proverb. The name of Lacedæmonia was generally applied to all the territories of the republic; but the Spartans continued to be a separate and exclusive race, and numerically bore to the community amidst whom they lived and ruled a remarkable disproportion.

Spartans, Laconians, and Helots.

The population of Lacedæmonia was divided into three ranks or castes, severed from each other by lines of demarcation which for many generations proved insuperable. The relative numbers of these classes differed considerably at different periods. At the time of the battle of Platæa, there is reason to believe that the helots, or labouring classes, were to the Laconians,

[6] Isocrates, Panath. § 7.

[7] Plutarch, in Vit. Ages.

or unenfranchised middle-class, as about three to one; and that these bore to the dominant Spartans nearly the same ratio.[8] Of the Laconians we know but little. They seem to have enjoyed personal freedom, and a certain portion of the soil remained in their hands. They were neither citizens nor slaves, but lived in a sort of neutral condition, destitute of civil rights, though liable to be called out on military service,—sharing all the burthens of the state, but incapacitated for the performance of any of its trusts or from participation in any of its honours. In this anomalous position, with too little freedom for contentment and too much for despair, the Laconians continued to occupy the position of an intermediate class between the ascendant clan, who in the sight of the law alone constituted *the people*, and the labouring population, whose lot was unrelenting bondage.

Dominant race.

Among the sovereign class, the law of social recognition was that of "equals,"[9] and every thing was done that institutions could do to realise this idea. Poverty and riches were decreed alike unsuitable to the true level of Doric purity and virtue. Each Spartan family had its estate of the same size as those around it, tilled by the abject descendants of its aboriginal possessors, and guarded by the most stringent laws against incumbrance or alienation. As the acquisition of wealth was forbidden, no coinage of the precious metals was allowed;

[8] Thirlwall, Vol. I. chap. 8, p. 305.

[9] Müller, Dorians, Book III. chap. 2, § 1.

CHAP. V.

and as luxury was supposed to be an infectious disease, all intercourse, save on public business, with foreigners was interdicted. It is almost unnecessary to add, that commerce of every kind was held in contempt, and that in no species of industry could a Spartan engage without degradation.

Theory of oligarchy.

To the latest period, the policy of the Greek oligarchy was inveterately jealous of the free habits of thought and feeling which trade inspires. Where they failed to crush it altogether, they disfranchised those who followed it as a pursuit, and threw shackles on its energy. They philosophised, moreover, against the evils that beset a commercial people, and in tones that, after the lapse of two thousand years, fall upon the ear as though we had heard them somewhere before. "If we tolerate commerce to any extent," says Aristotle, "our governing classes must not degrade themselves into merchants, nor waste upon the arts, which contribute to the increase of luxury, that attention which may so much more nobly be employed in agricultural pursuits; for these are the best occupations for the bulk of mankind, the most propitious to the health of both mind and body, and thereby the most conducive to national prosperity. Commerce ought to be restricted, therefore, to the supply of our own domestic wants. A state ambitious of command must, it is true, have a powerful marine; but this may be accomplished without raising the seafaring crowd to the rank of citizenship. A life of manufacturing toil or of chaffering barter is wholly incom-

patible with that dignified state of existence which the privileged orders should lead. Men accustomed to the humble occupation of providing for themselves the means of subsistence, or of accumulating wealth, are utterly unfit to form elements in any constitutional system. They are to be classed with things necessary to the commonwealth, but not to be ranked among its citizens. However indispensable to the state, they are no more parts of the state than food, which is indispensable to the life of an animal, is part of the animal. The productive industry of farmers or tradespeople, no matter how essential to our physical convenience and subsistence, is not, therefore, to be classed with the high political functions of soldiers, priests, or legislators."[10]

Military habits.

Such was the matured theory; Lacedæmon was the high school in which it was taught by forcible example. Every true-born Spartan was bred to the profession of arms. War was his proper element, wherein he lived, and moved, and had his being. Peace was to him but a breathing time between combats, an interval of rest necessary for physical renovation, but valued rather for its future effects than enjoyed while it lasted. Every branch of Spartan education was made subservient to the culture of military habits and ideas. Obedience—blind, passive, and unlimited—was branded upon every sense and feeling. It was intended to last life-long, and means were found whereby the im-

[10] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. IV. cap. 6–9.

CHAP. V.

pression became as indelible as the tattooing of the Indian's skin. Discipline was the great end and aim of Doric training, and nothing was too sacred to be sacrificed to its attainment. Individual honesty, the purity of youth, maternal tenderness, domestic affection, industry, justice, and mercy—all were alike trodden under foot, deliberately and systematically, in order to perpetuate a warlike stoicism.

Theft taught.

Theft was thus enjoined as an exercise, applauded when ingeniously committed, and punished when attempted unsuccessfully, on the plea that spoliation being one of the best means of carrying on war, it was necessary that the Spartan soldiery should be adroit in that branch of their profession. Drunkenness, on the other hand, was interdicted, because it led to breach of order and to perilous disorganisation: slaves were periodically, therefore, made drunk, and exhibited, while in that helpless state, to the young men of birth, that they might be disgusted and warned against excess.

Infanticide.

As was natural among a people almost wholly illiterate, and whose pride lay chiefly in the possession of physical strength or beauty, bodily defects were regarded with abhorrence and shame rather than compassion. In communities differently constituted, the hapless subjects of such infirmities were sheltered and sustained with more or less of care. But the Spartans were a simple-minded race, and their measures were summary and inartificial. Infanticide was the legal lot with them of all who

were born weak or deformed.[11] They found that it saved domestic care and public cost, either or both of which might otherwise have been wasted in the protraction of so many superfluous lives.

Spartan fear of over-population.

The Spartans seem to have frequently had their fears regarding the overgrowth of the working-classes.[12] Their sagacious apprehensions were easily excited, whenever those who laboured for their own support threatened to outnumber too palpably the leisure-loving portion of the community. "They greatly feared the multitude of their helots, and had many laws for protecting themselves against them."[13] They monopolised all the more fertile lands, "leaving only the waste and sterile parts to the multitude, that cultivating these with hard toil they might barely raise enough to maintain existence."[14]

Revolt.

Yet despite the paralysing, self-distrust wherein, as in a Nessus shirt, hereditary degradation never fails to wrap its victims, nature would sometimes raise her shackled head as though ashamed of her long-suffering and endurance. Under the exasperation of some new or wanton injury, wild shouts of vengeance would suddenly disturb the heavy sleep of oppression, and stimulate its listless appetite for blood. It was upon such occasions that the government of Sparta had recourse to those vigorous measures for suppressing disturbance and

[11] Plutarch, in Vit. Lycurg. 10.

[12] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. IV. cap. 16, § 5.

[13] Thucydides, Lib. IV. cap. 79.

[14] Isocrates, Panath. 22.

CHAP. V.

restoring order, from whose recital some men, with edifying charity, would affect to turn away incredulous. At appointed times armed bands were sent forth to traverse the country in disguise; with instructions that, availing themselves of their skill at ambuscade, they should fall unawares upon the strongest and most intelligent-looking of the peasantry, and, if possible, despatch them without noise, or the deed being known.[15]

The Crypteia.

But although this expedient possessed the twofold recommendation of helping to train youthful heroism to deeds of danger, while it helped to weed the rank field of labour, it was sometimes deemed too tardy and limited in its operation. More comprehensive measures were then resorted to. Whole districts, where the suspected classes dwelt, were proclaimed in a state of insurrection, and given over to the administration of martial law. The object of this proceeding is not disguised. The government were thus enabled to get rid of larger numbers of "the dangerous classes," without violating the ordinary forms or semblances of justice. Nor did time wear off the cruel edge of fear. To dread the recoil of the injury she had inflicted was an inevitable consequence of the policy of the state. Did Lacedæmonian influence extend?—her position was but one of the more peril. Did new dependencies drain off greater numbers of her haughty citizen-soldiery?—there was all the more need of

[15] Plutarch, in Vit. Lycurg. 23.

keeping down the slaves at home. During the Peloponnesian war, the Spartan government were, on one occasion, seized with violent apprehensions lest the helots should avail themselves of a favourable opportunity to effect some change in their condition. They, therefore, caused proclamation to be made, that as many as thought that they had deserved well of the republic should present themselves for emancipation,—trying them in this manner, and believing that those of highest spirit and the most likely to rebel would offer themselves. Out of all that came, two thousand were chosen; chaplets were placed upon their heads, and they were led in procession to the temples to receive their manumission. Immediately afterwards they disappeared, and how they were destroyed was never known.[16]

B.C. 424.

The curse of bondage.

The most learned and ingenious apologist of the Dorians, in modern times, after coolly questioning the correctness of the varied and abundant evidence of antiquity on the subject of the crypteia, is constrained to own, that "it was the curse of this bondage, that the helots abandoned their masters in their greatest need; and that hence the Spartans were compelled to stipulate, even in treaties with other states, for aid against their own subjects."[17] And of this aid they were fain more than once to avail themselves. Insurrectionary outbreaks were frequent and formidable; that of the Messenians,

[16] Thucydides, Lib. IV. cap. 79.

[17] Muller, Dorians, Book III. ch. 3, § 4.

CHAP. V.

which began in the year 465 B.C., lasted ten years, and taxed heavily the utmost powers of Sparta.[18] The recklessness of life and the transitory sense of fear, which the most sanguinary defeat leaves on the memory of a degraded and desperate populace, were signally conspicuous in the vassals of Sparta. As their numbers increased, in spite of all the arts and cruelty of their task-masters, in a proportion much exceeding that of the ruling class, suspicion and the hatred whose darkness none can know but those who have done others wrong, daily became greater. The passions which the law could with difficulty keep within bounds would, under peculiar provocation, burst forth; popular violence furnished pretexts for additional severity; crime was retaliated by crime, and the madness of the multitude by fresh proofs of the heart-chilling necessities of misrule.

Political institutions.

Eminently characteristic of the Doric spirit were the political institutions which it informed. Concentrated vigour, force, and energy, the ability to use the opportunities that can be seized on only by stealth, and the power of being able, without discussion or warning, to hurl the whole effective might of the state against whatever friend or foe appeared to stand in the way of its ambition, these were the great ends of Doric policy; and for their attainment, recourse was had to the most efficient forms. In the sight of the Spartans, a strong go-

[18] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 101, 102.

vernment was not merely the best, but the only government worth having or obeying. From a nominal admixture of the different kinds of rule, wherein hereditary royalty, a senate of elders, and a certain element of popular opinion, were supposed to be combined, the practical working of the system tended every year more and more to the concentration of all the real functions of government in an executive, elective and temporary, but for the time absolute. CHAP. V.

Laws of Lycurgus.

The legislature nearly fades from view. Legislation was, in truth, almost a solecism in Sparta. The mutability, which gave to legislative power so fascinating a charm among the speculative Ionians, was to the Dorians an abomination. The Spartans attributed nearly all their institutions to Lycurgus, the mandates of whose unwritten code were handed down from one generation to another with extraordinary reverence. They believed that his wisdom had provided sufficiently for the wants of a sound condition of society; and that to keep society in the sound state their great lawgiver had left it, their chief business was to shut out every social change and political innovation. They were trained in the conviction that society could be held stationary by institutions; and that as their institutions were the best conceivable, and capable of perpetual vigour, their duty was to suffer no alteration in laws calculated to insure the stagnant perfection of human nature, or at least so much of it as was Spartan.[19]

[19] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 70, 72; Xenophon, de Rep. Lac. I. 14; Aristotle, Polit. Lib. IV. cap. 12.

CHAP. V.

The kings.

In the earliest history of the Doric realm there were indications of distrust between the hereditary monarchs and the privileged class; and to check and control both, Lycurgus instituted two assemblies. Of the form of the more numerous of these bodies it is hard to discern any thing very clearly; the other, whose membership was for life, was of more practical importance, consisted of twenty-eight members,[20] who, from the age at which they became qualified to sit in this council, were called the elders. "The insignia of the Spartan kings were splendid; their political influence, compared with that of the senate, trifling."[21] But they possessed at least the title and dignity of kings, and the power which the heads of the army and of the priesthood necessarily enjoy. They were chief priests of Zeus, whose vengeance was ever ready to fall upon such as personally offended them; and the choicest offerings at his shrine became their perquisites whenever they chose to demand them. They appointed the sacred envoys sent upon great occasions to learn the will of the Delphian Apollo. A guard of one hundred foot-soldiers every where attended them, who, among other services, were useful, no doubt, in securing for their royal masters, in every incursion made into a neighbour's territory, the best of the flocks and herds, before the business of miscellaneous spoliation began.[22] For it was chiefly in the camp that the kings were invested

[20] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 57.
[21] Hermann, chap. 2, § 25.
[22] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 56, 57.

with monarchical prerogatives; at home all real power lay with the *Ephori*. CHAP. V.

The Ephori.

These functionaries, five in number, were probably first given by the Spartans as ministerial advisers to their kings; but the true purpose of their institution is revealed in the condition, that without their assent in the civil administration royalty could not act. The joint kingship was hereditary in certain families; the council was a very limited body; but the ephori were chosen by free election out of the Spartan community, and to this important office all were alike eligible.[23] Their tenure of office, if not limited, was seldom very long. They were responsible for the general conduct of public affairs; but in details a wide discretion was given them. Their consultations were private. They exercised a supreme surveillance over every department of the state, and could appoint, suspend, dismiss, or punish any subordinate functionary.[24] In cases of doubt or emergency, their decision had the force of law; and even royalty itself was not beyond the reach of their rebuke or their displeasure.[25] All diplomatic communications with foreign powers were conducted by them; they transacted business with their envoys, and named the persons sent by Sparta in a similar capacity.[26] As the external relations of the state

[23] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. II. cap. 5.

[24] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 82.

[25] Plutarch, in Vit. Cleomen.; Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 131.

[26] Plutarch, in Vit. Agesil. 9; Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 87.

CHAP. V.

grew complicated, opportunities continually presented themselves of successive encroachments on the regal authority. In the absence of the kings, or during intervals of royal incapacity, military expeditions were decided on by the ephori; the number of troops was determined, and the commanders nominated by them.[27] Finally, the guardianship of the public treasury was intrusted to their care; the business of the state continued to be conducted in the name of royalty, but the powers of administration virtually lay in the hands of the ephori.[28]

False ideas regarding Sparta.

Among the numerous perversions of truth which are systematically foisted upon our youth through the medium of the miserable things entitled school-histories, there are few more immoral and corrupting than the fabulous tales of Spartan virtue. For any thing that appears to the contrary in these lying epitomes, the national and social excellence of Greece might be taken for a plant indigenous specially in Laconia, and chiefly cultured there, though a few of its golden seeds were shed from time to time over the barren hills of Peloponnesus and Ionia. The delusion is, however, thanks to better habits of historical inquiry, beginning to disappear. We are getting somewhat clearer conceptions of the parts respectively played by Corinth, Samos, Ægina, Chios, Megara, and the

[27] Hermann, chap. 2, § 44, 45.

[28] Müller, Dorians, Book II. § 125.

other enterprising secondary states in the season of Greek youth and prime; and learning to mete with truer measure the praise so long engrossed under false pretences by one which, with vaster resources than any of them, did less for the literature, the arts, the industry, the social elevation, or the constitutional freedom of Greece, than the least of the threescore city-states around her. CHAP. V.

City of Sparta.

The metropolis of the Spartans, unlike the surrounding cities built by the various communities in their neighbourhood, "was singularly deficient in monuments."[29] Amyclæ, Therapne, Mycenæ, Tiryns, retained, even in their humiliation, the remains of noble works of primitive architecture, and numerous vestiges of the ancient symbolical religion[30] of the Pelasgians; while Sparta, wherein the plunder of Greece was absorbed and hoarded, could never afford the cost or time requisite for those embellishments which every other state delighted to lavish upon its seat and centre of rule. We read, it is true, of a sculptor named Callicrates, who was eminent at Lacedæmon. He made ants and other little animals out of ivory, so small that the limbs could hardly be distinguished,[31]—"vain waste of time, which no man of real judgment can regard as entitling him to fame."[32]

The idea of Sparta was negative. Its laws were conceived in exclusion, were maintained in exclusion; however modified or reluctantly changed,

[29] Müller, Dorians, Book I. chap. 5, § 12.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Pliny, Nat. Hist. Lib. VII. cap. 21.

[32] Χρονου παραναλωμα. — Ælian, Lib. I. cap. 17.

CHAP. V.

they never ceased to express exclusion. Internal spirit there was none, save to defend the bald crown of antiquity. Abroad the policy of Sparta was indeed aggressive and affirmative; but intrinsically, or except at the expense of others, it acquired nothing, discovered nothing, created nothing, and its legacy to posterity is emphatically—nothing! It had no industry or commerce till the days of its ruin and decline. In seven centuries it hardly produced one man of exalted genius or pre-eminent virtue,—not one to whom the world can be said to owe an idea, a hope, a pleasure. Instead of great men, in the sense that other countries have produced them, Sparta brought forth a Cleomenes, a Pausanias, a Lysander, a Cinadon,—great men of prey,—and nothing more.

Songs of the Spartans.

For what do we remember nations that have been with admiration, gratitude, or love? For their poets, orators, philosophers, historians? The literature of Sparta is a blank. "Of all the Greeks her citizens appeared to set the lowest value upon poetry."[33] Her soldiery are said to have marched to battle singing the songs of Tyrtæus and Terpander; but these were the melodies of other lands: Tyrtæus was an Athenian, Terpander an Æolian of Lesbos. Of their own not a vestige of poetry remains. Alcman, whose lyric fame they deigned to adopt, was a Lydian slave, imported while yet a boy into Laconia.[34] Though written

[33] Pausanias, Lib. III. cap. 8, § 1.

[34] Muller, Dorians, Book IV. chap. 6, § 2.

in the Doric dialect, early associations of Eastern tenderness and melody breathed through his compositions, and their beauty won for him at length manumission from servitude. But as a Spartan he never could have been recognised during his lifetime; wherefore, then, should his name be forged on Lacedæmon's unlettered grave?

Eloquence. Eloquence they affected to despise. In youth they were trained to silence; and in mature age they boasted of the brevity of their speech. Under such a system it is not wonderful to find them destitute of the power of argument or persuasion. Natural facility would of course, upon occasion, hide this defect. But they could not persuade others that their coarse apophthegms and parables were an equivalent for the ordinary grace and perspicuity of language. Of Brasidas, who gave utterance to his sentiments with more ease than his countrymen in general, Thucydides, in his calm, sarcastic way, says, that "he was not destitute of the power of speech for a Spartan."[35] But others of their leading men, conscious of their defect, tried to obviate the deficiency by resorting to the aid of their more eloquent neighbours: Lysander and Archidamus were indebted to Cleon and Isocrates, for the composition of their respective orations.[36]

History. With all their regard for antiquity, not a fragmentary chronicle of their exploits, their settlements, or their laws, remains. We are told,

[35] Αδυνατος λεγειν.—Lib. IV. cap. 84. [36] Thirlwall, Vol. V. p. 133.

CHAP. V.

indeed, that Chilon was reckoned one of the seven sages, and that Myson taught philosophy; but it is vain to catalogue mere names gathered from the incidental mention made by other writers. Until some plausible reason can be given why every vestige of their productions has sunk into oblivion, while those of their least powerful neighbours have survived in every variety of form, we must retain our disbelief that Lacedæmon ever possessed a literature worthy of Greek recognition or remembrance; nor is it likely we should be persuaded, though all the few who have been conjecturally ascribed to her were to rise from the dead to prefer their aggregate pretensions to a fame which, confessedly, they failed to win from their contemporaries. So different, in fact, was the national standard of taste and worth from that of Sparta, that several kinds of Doric poetry were not received into the literature of civilised Greece until the Alexandrian age,[37]—the age of corruption and decay. How much of Spartan inferiority is attributable to "negligence and incapacity,"[38] and how much "to the effects of a censorship of manners and of literary works,"[39] we presume not to decide.

The censorship.

How rigorously this censorship was exercised, and how wide the range of its surveillance, may be inferred from some of the instances of contumacious innovation which were made to feel the power of

[37] Müller, Book IV. chap. 7, § 6.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid. § 10.

its summary jurisdiction. When Terpander won the prize at the Carneian festival, he had accompanied the recitation of his popular verses by the tones of his cithara. He was consequently fined by the ephori for having produced unhallowed harmony by an increased number of strings, which he had added to the instrument.[40] The lyre of Timotheus, the Milesian, was taken from him because it had eleven strings, and hung up, as a memento of disobedience, in the *Scias*, or public hall, which an architect of Samos had been employed to build.[41] That of Phrynis was still worse used, on account of a like temerity in its owner, from whose hand one of the ephori snatched it during the performance, and cut away the innovating chords: for Sparta was resolved that no son of hers should ever be corrupted by the enervating strains of a harmony which his father had not heard.[42] No wonder we should find that, whenever they made any attempt in art, the Spartans "delighted more in imitation than creation;"[43] and that "monotony and uniformity" is supposed to have been characteristic of their forgotten efforts at composition.[44]

CHAP. V.

The youthful Isadas, rushing forth to win the praise of devoted valour during the second siege of Sparta, was decked, in the moment of victory, with

Penalties.

[40] Müller, Dorians, Book IV. ch. 6, § 3, note.
[41] Pausanias, Lib. III. cap. 12, § 5.
[42] Plutarch, in Vit. Ages. 16.
[43] Müller, Book IV. chap. 7, § 12.
[44] Ibid. § 10.

CHAP. V.

a chaplet, by command of the ephori; but they fined him a thousand drachmas at the same time for having presumed to enter the battle without his armour. Archilochus, the gifted but unhappy poet of Paros, was banished from Lacedæmon, on account of what was deemed the excessive freedom of his satires: in what his offence particularly consisted it were difficult to say. But the existence of an universal arbitrary and unsparing censorship of all acts and expressions is unquestionable; nay, it is specially noted as the efficient and necessary means whereby the whole fabric of Doric discipline and economy was held so long together.

Uniformity.

That this state-tourniquet should have wrought in Lacedæmon the benumbing effects it has every where else been found infallibly to produce, cannot seem surprising. A censorship is the indispensable lash wherewith the unnatural desire of uniformity ever seeks to drill mankind to its purpose. That desire is one of the oldest and amongst the most insidious foes of the moral welfare of mankind. Time and circumstance change its form, its terms, its aspect, its pretences—not its aim, or thirst of power. Wherever it has triumphed, and in exact proportion as its triumph has been complete, invention, industry, art, thought, purity, earnestness, idealism, have drooped, side by side, as brethren perish in the same dungeon. Vanquished and routed again and again, it is ever ready to creep meekly back, with its sympathy and sorrow for some newly discovered laxities, needing the curb,

or deep solicitude for wandering feet, that, for their own poor sakes, as well as for the general good, should be led—gently if possible, but at all events led, back into the right way. The variety of its garbs is infinite; its solemn plausibilities inexhaustible. It is ready to address the loftiest hopes of society, or pander to its meanest fears. It can weep when it dare not frown, and quibble when it dare not lie. Nothing is too high for it, nothing too low; and of its beguiling tongue may be said, as of the tempter's of old, "Health it promised, while death it devised, and corruption entailed from generation to generation!"

Incapacity of the Spartans.

But nations have other claims on our regard. We justly honour those who wisely have attempered military strength with civil freedom; or who, by foresight and forbearance, have conferred certain benefits on their tributaries,—weaning them by degrees from a less perfect civilisation, and fitting them for participation in their own superior polity—the only compensation conquest has to offer for the injury it inflicts. Let the aversion of all Greece for Sparta,—testified in their unanimous avoidance of her ways of life and rule,—say, has her memory these claims? How bitter is the taunt of Isocrates, when contrasting the moral influence of the Athenians, the comparative leniency of their political ascendancy over the lesser states, and their greater capacity for retaining their allegiance: "We held the supremacy threescore years and five, but the Spartans could hardly hold it ten; and

CHAP. V.

all admit that states which owe fealty to another are longest loyal where they suffer least."[45] The domination of Sparta was, from first to last, violent, shortsighted, and unstable; it accorded not with the feelings of its subjects; it struck no root in the subject soil. It was a naked imposition, accomplished often by profound duplicity, but incapable of skilful adoptions of local usages, or the adroit impersonation of provincial feelings, whereby a more sagacious imperialism would have secured, when most carefully disguising its aims.

Political and social affinities.

The structure of society, in nearly all the free communities of Greece, was essentially unlike that of Lacedæmon; and as civilisation and commerce became more generally diffused, their interests and sympathies daily diverged more irrevocably from those of Doric mould. Influences of this kind are always difficult to trace, even when their action and its results are before our eyes. Are not the most potent tendencies and feelings those whereof we are habitually unconscious? And is not this the case peculiarly in all that regards social characteristics? How little of these can be gathered, in any case, from public documents, edicts, or declarations of friendship or hostility; nay, how seldom the great abiding features of our own national life are fairly, or fully, or otherwise than in party exaggeration and time-serving falsehood, brought under our observation! "How will

[45] Panath. 8.

it stand in the Book of Time?"—with that no generation concerns itself. But whether conscious to themselves of the coincidence or not, it is certain that the majority of the Greek communities, in their political and social economy, resembled Athens far more nearly than Lacedæmon. While their political organisation changed with the changing fortunes of party, and the alternating ascendancy of the two great rivals, society every where wended onwards; and, because Ionianism favoured the developement of the great and good instincts which its antagonist scheme of life strove to repress, —the whole tendency of society was every day more and more towards that polity which the earlier wisdom of Athens had matured to the highest degree of perfection. Thus Corinth and Corcyra, though half Doric by lineage, and neither of them copyists of Attic polity, were as earnestly bent on industrial and social progress as Sparta was opposed to it; while of Megara, Rhodes, Cos, and Ægina, it might with truth be said, that they had become more Ionic than the Ionians themselves.

Free agricultural labour.

Even among the agricultural states of Peloponnesus, where Sparta's military pre-eminence and hegemonic claims were long unshaken, the fell example of her domestic cruelty seemed but to warn and deter; and when the orator would point out to the Athenians the want of homogeneity in the formidable array of their confederated foes, he dwells with particular emphasis on the essential difference in their

CHAP. V.

ways of life, indicated by the striking fact that, while all the secondary Peloponnesian communities were men who lived by their own free labour,[46] the Spartans were dependent on the toil of their slaves.[47] "The number of slaves in Laconia was a striking exception to the state of the rest of Peloponnesus, where, as in nearly all the merely agricultural republics of Greece and Italy, there were in early times extremely few of them. And we find afterwards, that the other states of Peloponnesus were exceedingly unwilling to undertake any military operation during harvest-time, because their citizens were themselves ordinarily employed at that season in getting in their crops, while to the Lacedæmonians, whose agricultural labours were performed by helots, one season of the year was the same as another."[48]

Contiguous free-labour states.

To Sparta the contiguity of free-labour states was a constant source of disquiet and apprehension, not without cause. When illustrating the difficulty of retaining a numerous labouring class in the state of peaceable "servility of mind," which he elsewhere describes as so desirable, Aristotle[49] contrasts the docility of the Cretan bondsmen with those of Thessaly and Lacedæmonia. "In Crete they have never shewn the same temper of sedition; for, all the cities there being sustained by the labour of bondsmen, it could never be the interest of any one

[46] Αυτουργοι.
[47] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 141.
[48] Arnold's note on the chapter of Thucydides above quoted.
[49] Polit. Lib. IV. cap. 10, § 3.

community to suggest rebellious hopes to the slaves of its neighbour, even though they should happen to be at enmity between themselves. But the Argives, Arcadians, and Messenians, being desirous to subsist by their own free labour, and being in perpetual collision with Sparta, have always endeavoured to divide and distract the forces of their enemy by stirring up the helots to insurrection; and the penestæ first revolted from their Thessalian masters during the wars of the latter with the Achæans, Perhæbians, and Magnesians."[50]

Crete.

Well might Aristotle point to the example of Crete; there, indeed, was beheld the realised ideal of an anti-commercial and anti-progressive system of polity maintained for unnumbered generations,—dark, mute, and unchangeable. In the joyous, variable, noisy assembly of ancient Greeks Crete seems to sit—like the corpse in the banquet-hall of the Egyptians—a terrible monitor to the thoughtless reveller of the condition to which he too might come!

Colonised by the Sidonians.

Almost the first notice we find of Crete is that which describes the all-searching industry of the Phœnicians as opening mines of iron there.[51] Minos probably came of the Sidonian stock, and ruled his own and the Pelasgic tribes with equal justice. The fruitful plains were freely tilled, and "crowned by ninety cities" in Ulysses' time.[52] Then oblivion's

[50] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. II. cap. 7, § 2.

[51] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 46.

[52] Homer, Odyssey, XIX. 178.

CHAP. V.

veil falls impenetrably over Cretan story during many ages; and when its folds are raised again we behold the entire of the island ruled undisturbedly by the Dorians. Their institutions were destined there to reach their full perfection; but between the laws and usages of Crete and Sparta a close resemblance is observable. As in Lacedæmon, the powers of royalty were superseded by an executive directory. They were ten in number, were chosen from the heads of the great families, and bore the title of *cosmi*.[53] They were invested with supreme authority, and were responsible only to a limited gerusia, or council of elders, consisting of those who had filled the office of cosmus. The leading aims and maxims of their political and social system were eminently Lycurgan. The master class were trained to bravery and idleness, the mass of the community to unrequited toil and unlimited submission.[54] Their insular position gave the Cretan Dorians the advantage of security from intrusive example or suggestive comparison over their Spartan kinsmen. The immutability which the latter could never thoroughly attain appears to have been by them for centuries perpetuated. Commerce, art, knowledge, industry, with their attendant train of innovations, were kept at bay. The system, as we are told, worked well for the comparatively small portion of society "who thus lived in *just* freedom and ho-

Doric polity in Crete.

[53] Müller, Dorians, Book III. chap. 1, § 1; Ibid. chap. 8, § 1.

[54] Hermann, chap. 2, § 22.

nourable leisure;"[55] while for the mass of the community who bent beneath their sway—it had been better for them had they never been born.[56]

Natural advantages.

How strikingly does the hapless doom of Crete proclaim the falsity of dependence for industrial prosperity upon what are termed "natural advantages!" Here was a land favoured with a healthful climate and a singularly prolific soil,[57] with an area nearly four times that of Attica,[58] and a population probably more numerous, secured by its position from hostile neighbours, and placed in the very centre of ancient civilisation, abounding in the mineral and vegetable treasures most in demand among the adjacent states, Europe, Asia, and Africa, and lying, as it were, in the very gangway of their trade and intercourse,—yet the industrial annals of Crete are, notwithstanding, vacant, and its maritime name is remembered only in reproach. The military discipline and prowess of the Cretans are seen only in the hired service of foreign potentates and their shipping is only heard of in connexion with piracy.[59] In the muster-roll of Xerxes' foes

[55] Mitford, Hist. of Greece, Vol. I. chap. 1, § 2, p. 21. (Edit. 1838.) Mitford's admiration of the Cretan polity is unbounded. "It was not only," he assures us, "the model of that so well known through the fame of Lacedæmon, but apparently the general fountain of Grecian legislation and jurisprudence, and which continued to deserve the eulogies of the greatest sages and politicians in the brightest periods of literature and philosophy." He adds, somewhat sarcastically, "This will not obtain from the liberal spirit of modern Europe that full approbation which it earned from antiquity."—P. 20.

[56] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. II. cap. 5, § 4.

[57] Homer, Odyssey, XIX. 178; "uberrima regna."—Virgil, Æneid, III. 106.

[58] About 3200 square miles.

[59] Diodorus Siculus, Lib. XI.

CHAP. V.

their venal bands appear not; nor any where on the side of freedom. To the common defence, or the aggregate fame of Greece in literature, science, or invention, they contributed nothing; and Polybius speaks of them as more depraved and demoralised than any other people of his time.[60]

Liberty too late.

Late in the evening of Greek life the exasperated Cretan populace rose in fury, overthrew the tyranny that so long had ground them to the earth, and proclaimed a free system. But it was then too late. Their attempt supplied but an additional proof that no earnestness of desire for freedom can fit a people to win or to enjoy it,—that no experience of wrong can teach the principles of justice,—that no weariness of suffering and idleness can implant those morals of industry, order, perseverance, self-denial, thrift, without which labour is in vain. Turbulence and anarchy reigned for a brief season, until, beneath the tranquillising frown of Rome, the troubled vision of their separate existence as a people passed away for ever.[61]

Factitious isolation of Sparta.

What the Dorians of Crete were enabled to effect by reason of their insular position those of Lacedæmon strove to realise by stringent rules of non-intercourse with the flexible and progressive communities around them; and for centuries the outer show of immobility seems to have been marvellously preserved. The peculiar forms of the exclusive and repulsive economy of Lycurgus con-

[60] Polybius, Lib. VI.

[61] Hermann, chap. 2, § 22.

tinued standing; and who from without could tell whether they had not proved impervious to the love of improvement and refinement wherewith the surrounding atmosphere had become fragrant? Who could say whether the love of novelty and of gain had eluded the rules of political quarantine wherewith the incorruptible Spartans had shut out the mean, dastardly, commercial habits that prevailed elsewhere? There has never been a time when the insolent assumption of pre-eminent virtue or wisdom did not pass for a good deal more than its authors were really worth; and in the art of self-extollation Sparta has never been outdone. Her territorial pre-eminence and martial discipline were obvious, and her own account of them, and how they had been acquired, were unquestioned, if not implicitly believed. The awe-struck Peloponnesians, who saw the irresistible hoplitæ[62] annually issue from their frugal home to brilliant deeds of fortitude and bravery, were naturally tempted to exclaim, "Were ever men like these?" and the illusion lasted till the eve of the Persian war.

Illusion of Spartan purity dispelled.

Thenceforth Sparta and the hollowness of her specious claims to priority and reverence were better understood. The scorn of gold and silver seemed less edifying when from secret hoardings vast sums rolled forth for the accomplishment of political purposes not the most generally approved.[63] Still more significant appeared the inability of her generals

[62] The Doric infantry.

[63] Böckh, Book I. § 6.

CHAP. V.

and statesmen to maintain even the decencies of personal honour when beset by foreign temptation. Her most illustrious names, Pausanias,[64] Leotychidas,[65] Lysander,[66] were branded throughout Greece, not merely with rapacity and peculation, but with shamelessly selling their country's cause for private lucre. Their example was found irresistible. The unnatural restraint upon just and legitimate gain had silently decayed; and, like the swathe of the embalmed dead, was rent at the first attempt to unfold it. Rapidly all classes were inflamed by the thirst of acquisition. The high-born senators were not free from the taint of avarice; and the highest trusts in the commonwealth grew attainable by bribes.[67] Healthful industry came not; they might re-partition their ill-cultivated estates,[68] and scramble for the chance-prey taken in war.[69] But at no period do we hear of any indication of a free or industrial spirit in Lacedæmon. It were marvellous in truth if we did.

Foreign policy of Sparta.

Lacedæmon often boasted of the part she had taken in overthrowing the tyranni; as though sympathy with the oppressions they inflicted, and not an aversion to every departure from the inflexible principles of Doric rule, had not been to her a sufficient motive for interference. The æsymnetæ

[64] Plutarch, in Vit. Pausan. 32.
[65] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 72; Paus. Lib. III. cap. 7, 8.
[66] Plutarch, in Vit. Lysand. 33.
[67] Aristotle, Lib. II. cap. 6, §§ 18, 14, 16.
[68] Hermann, ch. 2, § 47.
[69] Diodorus Siculus, Lib. XIII. cap. 106; Xenophon, Hellen. Lib. III. cap. 2, 6.

were the vivid expressions of popular will, and wielded, during a period of transition, the authority which that growing power had created. They were the first practical proof among the Greeks that the business of government might be efficiently carried on without ancestral sanctions or exclusive wisdom. Above all, the æsymnetæ were every where the fosterers of trade, and relied upon the elevation of the industrious classes to cement the social changes their policy involved. Even when, befooled and debauched with too much power, they had justly incurred the name of tyranni, they were patrons of art, sincere friends of peace, encouragers of commerce, and promoters of popular amelioration. How revolting all this must have been to Sparta, and how deeply it must have stirred her fears of change! Hence the zeal wherewith she espoused the cause of discontent wherever it happened to arise. Once allowed to interpose in the domestic concerns of a neighbour, she seldom failed to turn the opportunities of interposition to the establishment of her own predominant influence and control over her affairs; and the authority she gradually acquired in Peloponnesus is primarily attributed to the part she took, for her own reasons, against the tyranni.[70]

Continual aggressions.

Her standing policy was aggression, whenever and wherever there was a promise of impunity. "While the Ionians were founding cities upon either shore of the sea, and so enlarging Greece,

[70] Hermann, ch. 2, § 32.

CHAP. V.

while they drove back the barbarians, the Lacedæmonians, far from assisting them, were incessantly occupied with incursions into the territories of their neighbours. For not being content with a larger realm than any other state possessed, and learning, by experience, that countries may in law belong to their own good rulers, but in fact may be appropriated by whoever can bring against them the greatest military force, they determined to neglect all pursuits of agriculture, trade, or the like, and devoted their undivided energy to the assault and distraction of every community that dwelt in Peloponnesus.[71] In vain the victims of their overwhelming power and rapacity invoked the faith of treaties solemnised with all religious care and scrupulously observed. When their famous general, Lysander, was reproached with an act of political perfidy, he answered in the true Laconic spirit as well as idiom, "Shells are the toys of children, oaths of men."[72]

Her share in the general defence.

Nor can any thing be more just than the exclamation of a consummate critic and scholar, to whom our obligations have been already rendered frequently, when summing up the preparations made by Greece in the memorable struggle with Persia, "How little do the political and military operations of the Spartans appear when compared with those of the Athenians! How narrow-minded their patriotism—how closely bordering upon perfidy to the

[71] Isocrates, Panath. 7.

[72] Plutarch, in Vit. Lysand. 24.

common cause, the indifference which, upon the completion of the Isthmian wall, they testified for the fate of the Athenians, to whom, in their previous terror, they had addressed such urgent entreaties! The selfish and contracted policy of Sparta rendered her alike insensible to reason and to honour, until the emphatic exhortation of Chilius, the Tegean, induced her to march out and win laurels at Platæa."[73]

Jealousy of Athens.

Differing, as Athens and Lacedæmon did, in every social principle and every political idea, save ambition, and, by their strength, pre-eminent above all the other states of Greece, it was impossible to quench the mutual jealousy which, from a very early period, betrayed its fell beginnings, and whose unchecked violence at length contributed mainly to drag down both to ruin. Before the Persian war had suggested to Athens the hopes of empire, this feeling was comparatively dormant. The struggle between Argos and Lacedæmon for the hegemony of Peloponnesus gave no anxiety at Athens; and the conflicts of the latter with Ægina gave as little uneasiness at Sparta. But the eyes of Greece were fascinated by the triumph of popular fortitude and genius at Marathon, at Salamis, at Platæa, at Mycale, above all at Athens—twice abandoned by its population within the same year. These things had never been done before. The minor states felt, that by these they had alone been saved from bar-

[73] Wachsmuth, § 53.

CHAP. V.

barian bondage; and they not unreasonably attributed them to the inspiration of that domestic liberty which their deliverers so eminently enjoyed. And this was the condemnation of Sparta, the protectress and ensample of the opposite principle. All Greece had seen Lacedæmon cower at the moment of greatest peril to the common cause, and betray her readiness to abandon those she had stimulated to bear the brunt of Mardonius's invasion.[74] No deeds of mere discipline or valour could efface the remembrance of her perfidy, while the fame and influence won by her illustrious rival stung the envious heart of Lacedæmon with bitter mortification. Apprehensions lest the maritime ascendancy of Athens should be turned to sinister advantages were expressed, and unfortunately found too many justifications. It was in the first ebullition of this spirit of jealousy that the Athenians were required by Sparta to leave their dismantled fortifications unrepaired; and Themistocles deemed stratagem requisite to baffle the demand. So long as Cimon, who was the friend of Lacedæmon, directed the councils of his own state, this envy was held in some abeyance; and his conquests in the Chersonese were forgiven for the sake of the unworthy aid, which, in spite of popular reproaches, he had influence enough to have sent to the Spartans when well-nigh baffled by the insurgent helots of Ithome.[75]

With poetic justice this unworthy expedition

[74] Herodotus, Lib. IX. cap. 6, 7, 8; Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 74.

[75] Plutarch, in Vit. Cimon. 16.

Siege of Ithome.

proved the immediate occasion of the first open breach between the haughty rivals. The presence of Cimon's troops filled the Spartans with more distrust than thankfulness; and, ere the beleaguered town had fallen, the Athenian auxiliaries were commanded to withdraw. This open imputation on their good faith engendered a deep feeling of resentment. The opportunity for its full expression was awhile postponed, but the insult never was forgotten.[76] During the brilliant administration of Pericles—of whom it may be truly said, that he loved and cherished all that Lacedæmon spurned and loathed—the deepening animosity was skilfully restrained. But national passion is stronger than mere expediency, and when long curbed without being softened or corrected, is certain to break forth at last with but a more fierce and blind impetuosity.

Power of Thebes.

After the Peloponnesian war, Sparta claimed the protectorate of Greece. But her dominion was found more insupportable than that of Athens had been; and Corinth was again foremost in organising resistance. The ambition of Thebes led her also to contend for predominance, but there can be little doubt that the confederacy, formed at her instance for the overthrow of Lacedæmonian ascendancy, would never have succeeded but for the hatred with which the Spartans had inspired every free and industrial community in Greece.[77]

[76] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 102. [77] Plutarch, in Vit. Lysand. 27.

CHAP. V.

Invasion of Lacedæmonia, B.C. 369.

When Epaminondas, at the head of a powerful army, was hesitating, on the confines of Laconia, whether he should retire content with having beaten back the Spartans to their lair, or venture to invade the long impenetrable land, certain fugitives arrived with an assurance that he had but to shew himself on the banks of the Eurotas, and that great numbers of the population would rise in revolt and join him. Thus encouraged, and well aware, no doubt, of the deplorable condition of things that rendered such consequences probable, the invasion was resolved upon. With little difficulty the allied troops forced a passage through the hilly frontier, which, for six hundred years[78] (such is the magic prestige of a name), none of them, though near neighbours, had ever dared to overlook.[79]

Irresistibly the mingled tide of Argive, Elean, Theban, and Arcadian vengeance, swept on, till the smoke of their devastations was visible from the roofs of the unwalled capital: "the women of Sparta had never seen that sight before."[80] Antalcidas, one of the ephori, privily sent away his children to the island of Cythera.[81] Sullenly each citizen-soldier took his post, but the attempt to guard the numberless avenues of a straggling town revealed the inadequacy of its garrison to the keen eye of the enemy, as well as to its own. The cruel heart of Lacedæmon sunk within her, and, in the

[78] Plutarch, in Vit. Ages.
[79] Xenophon, Hellen. VI.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Plutarch, in Vit. Ages.

access of her terror, the chain of the multitude dropped from her hand. "A proclamation was issued by the government, informing the helots, that if any of them would take arms, and go into the ranks, the public faith was pledged, that all who rendered the state such service should henceforth be free." Upwards of six thousand men instantly gave in their names, so that when formed into recruiting ranks, "they struck the Spartans with *another fear*, so many did they seem." Nor was this apprehension quite allayed until the arrival of considerable reinforcements which came for hire from certain neighbouring states.[82]

Vacillation of the helots.

It is evident that had the majority of the helots rallied to the Theban standard, Sparta's doom had then been sealed. But in their perplexity and indecision, we read the most touching condemnation of the tyranny they writhed under. The curse of bondage is that it unmans the man. To hate and secretly betray their oppressors, to welcome the invader, and furtively aid his blow,—all this was natural enough; but when the crisis had come, and wounded, but still valiant, Sparta stood at bay, the malcontents, destitute of the habit of self-reliance, wavered, numbered the chances of complete victory, counted the hazards of an accommodation, shuddered at the consequences of being left by the allies to the vengeance of their old masters, and let their hour of hope go by. Epaminondas and his troops

[82] Xenophon, Hellen. VI.

CHAP. V.

withdrew, to return again, under not very different circumstances, years afterwards. But the experience of the helplessness of a vassal multitude, bound together by no better tie than a community of suffering, and inspired practically by no higher impulse than a thirst for individual revenge, had not been lost on their oppressors. The sense of peril, narrowly escaped, served but to steel their resolution "to adhere to their old system of exclusion and injustice."[83] The heart of the Spartans was hardened; and, because they would not let their unhappy subjects know the blessings of industry and freedom, they were destined to see their country ravaged, their dear-bought pre-eminence, as a state, rent from their enfeebled grasp, their allies one by one detached from them, and, finally, their vaunted constitution, at whose bidding they had sacrificed all, trampled in the dust by domestic usurpation.

Liberation of Messenia.

But, ere Epaminondas quitted the peninsula, he accomplished, in the name of the free states of Greece, a memorable act of atonement, which was due to the earliest and the longest sufferers from Spartan domination. Messenia, whose plains adjoined Laconia, early provoked the rapacious lust of its Doric rulers. Under what pretence they flung themselves at first upon this noble prey, is uncertain and unimportant. Enough for them that the lands of the Messenians were fairer and more

[83] Hermann, chap. 2, § 48.

fertile than their own,[84] and that they resolved to appropriate them. Long and bravely the Messenians combated their insatiable foes, who tardily and sanguinarily gained upon them. The first invasion is supposed to have taken place B.C. 743, and the entire country was not reduced until seventy-five years later. Confiscation parcelled out the lands among the victors, who treated the population as their serfs. Resistance to ill-treatment, sometimes smothered, but sometimes blazing forth in rash rebellion, led to still worse extremities. The iron heel was only planted the more ruthlessly on the neck of the subdued; while all who could quit the home of their sorrow and humiliation sought refuge in exile. But the name of the land, and the spirit of its people, lived. Though changed from what it had been, and tinged with many hues incidentally acquired by the vicissitudes it had undergone, that spirit still loved deeply, and hoped fervently, and waited faithfully, as though the end were not yet. And now as the illustrious Theban quits Laconia, a shout of more than wild insurgent joy salutes his entrance on the Messenic soil. As one man the helot multitude surround and welcome him,—helots no more! But there are more than manumitted helots here; some from the kindred towns of Sicily, some from Africa, many from Naupactus, which the Athenians had given them for a dwelling-place: the born-in-exile are returned, and tread

[84] Plutarch, in Vit. Ages.

CHAP. V.

their fathers'— their own land! Onward they pass, their hero-friend, and they, and the deep column of Thebes' Sacred Band.

Restoration of Ithome.

Reaching the ruins of Ithome, the last stronghold of former liberty, the work of restoration is begun. "The ancient rites of Demeter, which had been discontinued so long as Messenia was governed by the Spartans, who every where exterminated these mythic ceremonies, were solemnly re-established."[85] The renovated country needs a new metropolis. Architects the most famed of the time, and artificers of every degree, already are assembled there, and such their instructions, and their work, that the new Messena long outlasted every vestige of Lacedæmon's power. When the outer walls had been raised high enough for defence, Epaminondas went his way, leaving the rescued and replaced people to complete his noble purpose and design.[86] Thus, after a servitude of centuries, the Messenians, whom Sparta might have interfused with her own people, or, treating wisely and justly, have made an inalienable and invaluable ally, rose in her despite to an independent position, not of necessity hostile, or incompatible with her internal safety or peace, but fatal to her dreams of invincibility and empire.

Permanent disaffection.

At all times the exclusion of the great mass of the population from all valuable privileges, though

[85] Müller, Dorians, Book I. ch. 5, § 16.

[86] Thirlwall, Vol. V. p. 101.

a fundamental and inflexible condition of the Spartan polity, could not but keep alive a sense of instability in the government. A great and growing majority of the population were left to brood over their hereditary causes of enmity and discontent, and anxiously awaited each recurrence of debility or weakness in the councils of oppression that promised them an opportunity of revolt. "They lived, as it were, in perpetual ambush, watching the moment when they might take vengeance for the wrongs they had suffered from those whose leisure was the result of their toil."[87] Time, which enables a wise and humane government to win affections that at first were hostile, and to weld together into one incorporate and indissoluble mass elements the most dissimilar and incongruous, serves to strengthen and indurate the bitterness and hate wherewith a subjugated people regard the short-sighted impolicy which keeps them in mind of their degradation. Discontent, which elsewhere is sufficiently dangerous, is stimulated by the fervour and inspired with the dignity and enthusiasm of nationality, in a people among whom the descendants of their conquerors live as a permanent garrison encamped in the land. And to act thus was the pride of the Spartans. Even with the Laconians, or intermediate class of the population, any community of feeling, not to speak of fusion, was wholly impossible. They were a superior race,—a race whose

[87] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. II. cap. 7, § 1.

CHAP. V.

right is self-inherent, and whose rank was sovereign. Lysander fell, in a desperate attempt to overturn the old constitution, at the head of a popular insurrection, as Pausanias had done many years before.[88] But his defeat could give little lasting security to a government whose obsolete forms and principles were no longer effectively tenable. Unable to recede, and unwilling to advance, it occupied the hopeless position of those who, having abandoned a portion of the ramparts, and admitted the long-excluded beleaguerers within their lines, instead of making peace, and agreeing to live together in amity and good neighbourhood, set their backs to what is left of their broken walls, and keep up the conflict as fiercely as ever. Such a struggle, when long persisted in, can have but one termination,— the misery of all, and the destruction of the best part of that for whose possession they had striven and suffered. Foreign arms and diplomacy, sooner or later, makes their own of a nation so rent by faction; and, as in Lacedæmon, both parties are finally doomed to a common humiliation and servitude, because they would not accord to each other the mutual blessings of freedom.

Concessions too long delayed.

At the commencement of that memorable struggle into which the rival claimants of the hegemony of Greece entered B.C. 431, certain concessions were wrung from the domestic fears of the oligarchy,

[88] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. IV. cap. 14, p. 282.

and for the sake of military strength certain of the helots were enfranchised. This relaxation of severity, "had it been earlier, had been kind," and, springing from a generous impulse, had probably borne good fruit. But it was delayed until necessity had too palpably become its only motive, and no man believed that what had been so long withheld, and at length was thus bestowed, came of any wiser or better spirit of rule. The blindness of oppression is evidenced in nothing more than the season and the tone of its best actions. It can never find it in its cold heart to do good till the credulity of suffering is spent, and the hour of gratitude gone by for ever. It cheats itself of its reward, and seems perversely bent upon contriving how it may retain the whole of the reproach while fortune wins the praise. CHAP. V.

Two bold attempts at internal reform were made, the one by king Agis, the other by his successor, Cleomenes.[89] But both proved abortive. They were substantially, in fact, alike in their wild hope,—the hope that springs from the despair of earnest minds born too late for appreciation by a demoralised and unbelieving people. A spirit of self-devotion had survived in them, whereat they fondly imagined it possible to relume the calcined energy of their country. Vainly they offered to resign their personal wealth,—vainly they laid aside the ornaments and luxuries of their station, as an example of the restoration of the Lycurgan order Attempts at reform.

[89] Plutarch, in Vit. Agis; in Vit. Cleom.

CHAP. V.

of things. The belief in self-denial was dead; Sparta's faith in herself was gone. Plot and intrigue brought both of them to an untimely end. Agis was strangled in the midst of his capital; and Cleomenes, having abdicated to save his life, perished in a fray at Alexandria.

Retrogression.

Mournful enough; and yet there is that about their chivalrous attempt at social and political amelioration which renders it worthy of note. Its one idea consisted in the hope of retrogression. They looked around, and shuddered at the weakness of a state, at the driftless and dissolute life of a community whose invincible discipline and concentrated vigour were still remembered in a proverb. Taught only to revere what had already been, instead of exercising their natural intelligence in creating what new circumstances required, and fascinated by the fame of the past, which seemed to stand in reproachful contrast with the ignoble present, Agis and Cleomenes, unsuspicious of the moral impossibility wherewith they had to contend, with a zeal which it were base to disparage, staked riches, crown, life, all,—upon the fatal illusion of retrogressive reform. Could they only get society back into its boyhood, it must be healthy and vigorous again. Were property once more cut up and redistributed in equal lots, poverty and misery, like corrupt wealth, would take to themselves wings and fly away. The *rhetra*, or project of law, proposed by Agis is literally this;—the provisions for cancelling of all debts whatsoever being only a neces-

sary preliminary to the abolition of money; and that for the adoption of a given number of respectable foreigners being merely an expedient for filling up promptly the muster-roll of the sovereign caste. But professedly the whole scheme was a reverential copy from Lycurgus. Centuries of ruinous victory and unconquered provincialism, of sanguinary rigour tending only to enervate, and corruption, and indolent mastery, tending only to insecurity and insubordination, had taught Sparta nothing; and her best and bravest sons could bethink them of no better scheme for her redemption than to rub the gilding off some of her chains, and forge the rest of them anew.[90]

Influence of the ephori.

It seems irrational to attribute the decline of Sparta, as some have done, to the innovating power of the ephori. They do not appear to have been essentially unlike the ministers of modern times; and the experience of various countries has shewn how much the stability and efficiency of national governments are promoted by an expedient which shares the practical direction of the many executive departments with those who fill the supreme dignity. The varied powers and vaster influence centred in their hands would have amounted to an intolerable despotism, if exercised solely by the kings; the advantage of selected ability in the conduct of public affairs was secured; and a certain path kept

[90] Hermann, chap. 2, § 47–49.

CHAP. V.

open for ambition and energy, however humbly born.

Decline of Sparta.

For us, the most interesting light in which the institution of the ephori can be viewed is that which reveals to us through them the actual working of the Spartan constitution, not as the passive mechanism set a-going by Lycurgus for no better end than to revolve upon the axis he had chosen, and at the rate he had prescribed. The ephori were not of his institution; they were among the few natural and elastic portions of Lacedæmonian rule. Without them it must soon have stopped altogether. But it cannot be denied that they formed a means whereby a wish for innovation might legally find a vent; and it is equally true, that in the course of such innovation the entire fabric of Doric system fell to pieces. To blame the ephori for this is idle. They were, after all, the only political instrument by means of which Sparta could have maintained herself in the perilous position she chose to assume for any length of time. Whether her foreign and domestic policy was good or evil, their function was but expressive and representative, — their influence public and appreciable. States do not gradually perish by such means. External violence may thus be invited, or foreign bribery may thus ensnare. But Sparta's ruin came not from without. The disease was internal, and its seeds were early sown, even in the primary epoch of its perverted and unnatural being. It was an attempt to found a per-

petual succession of an indomitable race, by means of a discipline incompatible with all that elevates man above the obedient and intrepid brute; and the stoicism which formed its ideal of perfection was sought through the habitual infliction of the greatest misery on the greatest number of its own unhappy subjects, and the unrelenting exercise of cruelty to all who crossed its rapacious path. It was the system of which she had so long boasted that eventually bowed Lacedæmon to the dust. The countless wrongs over which her pride oft laughed in scorn rose up at length in judgment and condemned her, burying her idle citizenship and profitless slavery in one common and unhonoured tomb.

CHAPTER VI.

IONIC LIFE.

"In all the arts which are essential to the comfort and embellishment of life, you will find that Athens, either as the inventor or improver of them, has been the means of disseminating their benefits among her neighbours. Finding, moreover, that her own territory yielded but a limited supply of food, being very prolific in certain fruits, while in others it was deficient, and discerning the utility of exporting some things and importing others, our city formed the Piræus,—now the general mart of Greece,—wherein so vast and various is the store of merchandise, that many things, which singly it is elsewhere difficult to procure, may be had readily and in abundance there." [1]

CHAP. VI. THE GREEKS.

How vividly does the free, progressive, busy, hopeful Ionic life, matured and elevated as it was by the earlier wisdom of Athens, contrast with all we know of Lacedæmon! In the masterly picture drawn by Thucydides at the moment when both of them stood, perhaps, at the zenith of their power, are still revealed with the graphic force peculiar to contemporaneous delineation, not only

[1] Isocrates, Panegyr. 5.

the leading traits of the great rivals, but the nice distinctions of character which tell us so much more of what we would fain know, than all the subsequent details of marshalled hosts, beleaguered towns, desolating forays, serried ranks upon the plain, — fight, loss, and victory — glorious and immortal, were not mortal memory humanely frail.

Character of the Athenians.

At the bar of the elders of Sparta the ambassadors of Corinth, to gratify resentments of her own, sought by every means to rouse the jealousy and arm the hate of Lacedæmon against Athens. "Think you how different are her citizens from yours, and what manner of men they are with whom you must contend. Far from fearing change or novelty, they love it; and what their inventive brain has once devised, their hand is prompt to do: while you, so far from troubling yourselves to think of new expedients that might benefit your allies, loathe every thing that wears the aspect of innovation, even to the endangering of your own well-being. Bold beyond their strength, and venturous above what their judgment would warrant, even in peril and extremity they hope on; while you, men of Sparta, have always been far beneath what you might have been; and you still distrust counsels that may be surely depended upon. While the Athenians are stirring and abroad, you stand and dream; they have visited every land, while you hug the vanity of your isolation; and they find their account in habits which are continually enabling them to add to their wealth and influence, while you, when asked to undertake any foreign enterprise, tremble

CHAP. VI.

even for that which is under your hand. Whatever they have once considered and resolved on, the Athenians will go through with, or deem so much time spent for nothing; if success crowns their early efforts, they think lightly of that in comparison with what they may win by perseverance; and if they fail, they put the best face on the matter, and by entering into other hopes, have already repaired the mishap. Thus they are indefatigably occupied all the days of their lives; for unemployed leisure, with nothing to do, is more irksome to them than continual business."[2]

Constitution of society.

In forming our conceptions of Athenian life, we must carefully discriminate between the forms of government and the constitution of society. Athens was termed a democracy, because, in a population of 500,000 souls, somewhat less than 14,000 individuals possessed the franchise; but from all that is associated in our minds, with the forced uniformity of station, habits, manners, and companionship, to which more than one attempt has been made elsewhere, by religious or political fanaticism, to reduce mankind, Athens was happily free. Of the singularly diversified and chequered population who dwelt within sight of the Parthenon, there was at all times a large proportion whose circumstances enabled them to enjoy the costliest luxuries, and to mingle with the most refined society, who neither were citizens nor aspired to be so. On the other hand, there was always a very considerable number

[2] Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 70.

of those who possessed the privileges of citizens, without any such advantages of fortune or the hope of obtaining them. These laboured at mechanical art, in different departments of retail traffic, or in agricultural pursuits, for subsistence. *Citizenship* was a political function appertaining to persons of a great diversity of conditions, while the privilege, individually far more enjoyable, of mere *denizenship*, or the right of living in the most charming spot the earth at the time contained, under the protection of the most equal laws, and in the midst of the most brilliant and accomplished society of the age, belonged to a wide and miscellaneous crowd, hardly susceptible of any technical definition whatever. Of each component element of this crowd, a word or two may be allowed in its place.

Distinctions of rank.

Meanwhile, it is important to observe, that under no circumstances or frenzy of party rancour did the mean and barbarising lust of levelling manifest itself at Athens. There was great disparity of ranks, which could not fail of occasionally provoking the envy of morbid minds; but the permanency of such disparity was recognised as rightful and inevitable. Rank was the creation of flexible opinion, not of unyielding law; and opinion, being highly educated and intelligent, instinctively sustained the immunities of true civilisation. There were, in like manner, at all times infinite diversities of wealth, provocative of passing jealousies, of wishes among the poor that the rich were more heavily taxed, and of protests from the rich that

CHAP. VI.

they yielded more than their fair contingent. But of equalising estates, or other Procrustean schemes against the legitimate accumulation of property, we hear nothing. Athens lived by commerce; and commerce loathes alike restraints on a man's industrious accumulation in life, or equitable re-distribution in death. Finally, there were at Athens many reservations of social intercourse and exclusions from private association, exercised without affronting political susceptibility, or entailing odium or reproach on those who thus sought to narrow the circle of their intimacies to such as were qualified to share them.

Social exclusiveness.

We may well believe that exclusiveness, in ancient as in modern society, was oftentimes obedient to caprice and whim, although frequently inspired also by a sensitive or fastidious taste which sought for a degree of refinement in its associations such as can seldom be supposed to characterise a very extended circle. And that some who were excluded were not thereby pained no one will believe. But it is the true praise of Athenian society, that it recognised the right of every man to live as suited his pleasure or his means, and to choose in private his own company.[3]

Privacy.

Privacy in our anti-social meaning of the pri-

[3] A fine appreciation of this, as well as many other of the subtle but expressive traits of the Ionic character, pervades the interesting work of Bekker, entitled "Charicles," which is intended to portray the private life of an Athenian youth of fortune and education. No better antidote can be supplied to the errors and perversions of Mitford and others in this respect.

vilege was rare, if not unknown, among the out-of-door dwellers on the shores of the Mediterranean, then as well as now. Among the gay and garrulous Ionians, the habit of reserve to which we are accustomed would probably have passed for oddity or folly; and of all ancient communities that of Athens was the best able to avenge rudeness or to punish supercilious airs with the lash of ridicule. Where commerce, study, travel, and pleasure, brought together so great a number of strangers, no standard of mere local value could maintain its currency; pretension of all kinds was subject to a heavy discount; and, unless a man was gifted with social or intellectual accomplishments, his estimate of his own importance, from whatever source derived, seems to have gone for very little. Insolent intrusion or vulgar curiosity seldom met with impunity. If Cimon was praised for throwing open his orchards near the city[4] to the people, it is obvious that he might close their gates again if he pleased. Pericles refused invitations, on the score of business, without giving umbrage to his friends or supporters; nor was he ever assailed by the comic writers, because the companions of his leisure were such men as Zeuxis, Ictinus,[5] or Damon the musician, whose skill as a composer was only inferior to his political sagacity and information. The unlimited freedom of personal censure and ridicule permitted on the stage, amounting, as it often did, to the grossest scurrility,

[4] Plutarch, in Vit. Cimon. 13.

[5] The chief architect of the Parthenon.

CHAP. VI.

instead of warranting the supposition of a general license of the same sort in daily life, affords a strong presumption of the contrary. Had the populace been at liberty to vent their spleen against individuals elsewhere, the use of derogatory nicknames and the arts of melo-dramatic caricature would not have been half as attractive as we know they were.[6]

Society in Megara.

Do we err in ascribing to this enlightened and liberal tone of social feeling an important influence on political thought and action; or in attributing to the wise polity of Athens more especially in her free industrial system, a reciprocal influence on private manners? Was the coincidence accidental, of a community being at the same time the most tolerant of foreign skill and of domestic differences —the most frank and hospitable to strangers, and the most flexible of "sweet-speaking mortals"—the readiest to concede parity of legal rights to all, whether strangers or born in the land, and yet the most willing to recognise ungrudgingly the presence of ancient nobility, and cheerfully to concede them that personal deference and social respect which they claimed? Do we not seem to hear, in all these mingling sounds, the harmonies of true civilisation,—a civilisation indebted for its being to wisdom of laws, generosity of customs, and independence of spirit, and gratefully contributing to establish, perfect, and refine all that was good in them? How

[6] In Nubib. Act I.; in Equit. Act I. sc. 2.

pitiful the impatient efforts of Megara to outdo Athens in every thing to which she imagined Attic celebrity was owing, contrasted with the self-respect, liberality, and courtesy of her illustrious rival! The jealous laws of Megara were inhospitable to foreigners, and distinctions of rank were an offence to her. She would insist that comedy was an invention of her own; and the Athenians were content to retort by dubbing all coarse jests Megaræan. Eager, indefatigable, but intolerant and insecure of her inward self-respect, Megara grew formidable without growing strong, and clever without becoming wise. Her prosperity was not lasting;[7] for her policy was not anchored to the only sure holding-ground — a sound social state.

Woollen manufactures.

Megara succeeded pre-eminently in accomplishing all that energy could accomplish, in attaining all that acuteness of intelligence and active ambition could attain. An arid strip of shore, lying between a lofty range of mountains, which were destitute even of mines, and the sea, constituted her whole territory.[8] Her dependence, consequently, was altogether centred in her own inventive and persevering skill. This soon enabled her to build and man a vast commercial navy, which brought her the productions of other states, and took them in return various articles which she found a way of making cheaper or better than the same things could be had elsewhere. One of these is particularly mentioned, the

[7] Thucydides, Lib. IV. cap. 70.

[8] Isocrates, de Pace, 16.

CHAP. VI.

common tunic, or shirt without sleeves,[9] which was made of a coarse kind of cloth; of this the Megaræans manufactured great quantities for exportation, and from it very large profits were derived. Her merchants individually prospered; and at one time they were said to be the wealthiest in Greece.

Employers and operatives.

Their political organisation was not wanting in freedom nor their external policy in spirit.[10] How happened it, then, that in stability of counsels and the repute of consistent purpose, they seem always to have failed? Or, how came it that internally they seldom long enjoyed tranquillity? We look in vain for any satisfactory exposition of the cause among the writers of antiquity: only from the incidental observations they let fall we are led to the belief, that to the want of a higher tone of civilisation, such as existed at Athens, founded not merely on a finer intellectual culture, but on more tolerant political views, the inferiority of the Megaræans, as a people, is attributable. Another cause which, doubtless, was closely linked with this, if not in itself the chief root of it, is suggested by the knowledge that, while the democratic merchants and employers were realising great fortunes by the application of skill and enterprise so creditable to their intelligence and perseverance, the operatives[11] by whose labour their manufactures were created were, for the

[9] Ἐξωμὶς.—Aristoph. in Lysist. 662, &c.

[10] Herodotus, Lib. VIII. cap. 1.

[11] They were called Ἐξωμιδοποιοι, literally, "the sleeveless-shirt makers."

most part, steeped in a condition peculiarly degraded and deplorable. They were not, as elsewhere, "their servants born in the land," with legal rights and remedies, and receiving adequate wages in return for their labour, but unhappy beings purchased or otherwise obtained in foreign realms,[12] between whom and their masters the difference of race (for they were not Greeks but Barbarians, as most other nations were distinctively termed) was, no doubt, made a justification for every ill-usage and contumely. Do we need historical authorities for the inference that the Megaræan character was socially defiled, deformed, debilitated by such a practice? If this needs proof, what is historically certain or clear?

Respect for ancestry.

Regard for ancient lineage was, through every change of plight and policy, fast rooted in the Ionic mind. The old families remained every where, and even in the most democratic states preserved certain political privileges, and what they doubtless prized still more certain social distinction. Perhaps we might look in vain for any quoteable passage of history or politics where this is set forth in so many (or rather in so few) words. The political jealousy of the demos was too sensitive on such topics to render assertions of the kind popular; and the friends of the old *noblesse* were possibly unwilling to direct invidious attention to them. But the value set by every ambitious man upon

[12] Xenophon, Memorab. Socrat. II. 7.

CHAP. VI.

claims to good family, is continually revealed in those biographic notices, through which we learn that Harmodius and Aristogeiton were of the house of the Gephyræi, who traced their origin to Cadmus — that Miltiades was of royal blood — that Aristides and Pericles were eupatridæ — that Solon came of the house of Codrus, and Alcibiades was one of the Alcmæonidæ[13] — that Tisamenes was of the Elean family of the Clytiadæ, — while Timoleon, "both by his father's and his mother's side, was among the best born of the sons of Corinth."[14] Aristophanes knew well the depth of this feeling when, in his attacks on Cleon, who owed his fortune to trade, he reviles his low extraction, and sneers at him as "the leather-cutter" and "the tanner."[15] He knew that the same people who relished the sarcasms at the vulgarity of the man, would not have tolerated any questions of his rights as a citizen or a statesman.

Landed property.

From the time when their exclusive political privileges ceased the aristocracy were distinctively known, partly, perhaps, by their claims to high descent, and partly by their continued possession every where of landed property to a considerable extent.[16] The inequalities incident to the primary partition, and appropriations of conquest in remote ages, had been maintained during many generations

[13] Herodotus, Lib. IX. cap. 33.
[14] Plutarch, in Vit. Timol. 3.
[15] In Equit. Act I. sc. 2.
[16] Böckh, Book IV. § 3.

by the customs (stronger than written laws), which forbade alienation or incumbrance. But after the creation of another wealth by commerce, and the introduction of more expensive tastes had beguiled the ancient families into expenditure they could ill afford, necessity drove them into inextricable debt; and one of the first acts of Solon was, by certain arbitrary edicts, to put an end to the ruinous transactions pending between the bankrupt nobles of Attica and their usurious mortgagees. It would seem as if a portion of his scheme was to liberate all estates from the hereditary shackles that had theretofore bound them; to render land as saleable as any other commodity; and so to do the utmost law could do to rescue the soil from embarrassed and unimproving hands, and to place its possession among the wholesome prizes to which industrial thrift and energy might aspire.

Properties and tenancies.

Many consequences flowed from this far-sighted policy. Landed property throughout Attica became divided, not arbitrarily into equal lots as in Laconia, nor helplessly into factitious inequalities as it had once been, but naturally, and as the enterprise and capital of the community determined, into fee-farms, tenancies, and estates of infinitely various size.[17] The desire of possessing land, which seems universal and instinctive, was not diminished, but rather increased, by its saleability; while the exclusive claims to power which continued long to

[17] Böckh, Book IV. § 3.

CHAP. VI.

be elsewhere associated with such possession, were eradicated wholly. The very name of land-holder yielded to the impress of the gradual but notable change; and the word that previous to Solon's day had been the significant title of an ascendant class, came, in a few generations, to be applied as familiarly to the wealthy but plebeian possessors of land. *Geomori*, once the distinctive appellative of the lords of land, came to be applied to land-holders, irrespective of the various degrees of property which diversity of tenure inevitably tended to introduce. In process of time, as property was freely and frequently bought and sold, many, whose ancestors belonged to the pristine class of the land-lords,[18] were not ashamed to cultivate their old lands, and to purchase new ones; and thus we read of geomori as farmers in Attica, while a class, likewise called geomori, are assailed as being oligarchs at Syracuse. We cease to hear the epithet applied distinctively to the highborn among the Athenians, who usually are spoken of with the more literal, and yet more graceful respect, as of "gentle blood," or persons "of good family:" and the example of Attica was in this respect not lost on other states.

The priesthood.

To a great extent the priesthood remained from early times the hereditary avocation of the "well-born." At Athens there were two sacerdotal families, the Eumolpidæ and Lycomidæ, from the latter of which Themistocles was sprung. At Elis

[18] Hermann, chap. 4, § 4.

the race of the Iomidæ[19] were looked on as set apart from one generation to another as worthy to minister in sacred things, and, like persons so endowed, seem to have been not indisposed to turning their celestial confidences to their own temporal account. The service of the oracles afforded many facilities for the perpetuation of their influence; and their authority seems to have rested on custom rather than on law.[20]

Physicians.

In several communities, likewise, the practice of pharmacy was confided to their peculiar care; but if, while medicine was confined to a traditional knowledge of charms and specifics, its pursuit was suffered to be exercised as a monopoly, there is abundant proof that, with the advance of science, such exclusion was practically broken down; and at Athens the preservation of the public health became an object of too much regard to be left to the contingencies of sacerdotal skill. Physicians of eminence were paid by the state; and there would seem to have been a laudable competition among the various governments which should secure their services. Democedes, of Crotona, was in such repute, that the Æginetans gave him a handsome stipend for residing among them. After some time the Athenians induced him, by a higher salary, to devote his talents to their welfare; and, finally, the Samians outbid all others, and the popular prac-

[19] Herodotus, Lib. IV. cap. 33.

[20] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. I. tit. 2; Lib. II. tit. 3, § 1.

CHAP. VI.

titioner settled in their isle. It is particularly noted by Herodotus that Democedes owed no part of his success to any traditionary knowledge, or the teaching of the hereditary guardians of health, of whom he was not one.[21]

Hereditary professions.

The hereditary principle among the Ionians, and those mingled communities where the Ionic spirit of industry and liberty prevailed, did not imply that every member of a family should follow the particular calling of his father, as was the case among the unprogressive Egyptians, and, in this respect their copyists, the Spartans.[22] How different from their dark, soul-deadening perpetuities, was the condition of society, where, as was the case in nearly all the commercial states, the power of rank was chiefly felt in the subtle but secure influence of its social prestige, and where its privileges were prescriptive and conventional, rather than assignable, or capable of enforcement, according to law. This is in some degree illustrated by the personal history of Epicharmus. Being of the house of the Asclepiadæ, the healing art was his hereditary profession; and there can be little doubt that, in his native island, Cos, where his family had great possessions, and were regarded with peculiar honour, he might have led a life of easily earned enjoyment, if not of high professional consideration. But the Coans were a people full of persevering

[21] Herodotus, Lib. III. cap. 131.

[22] Ibid. Lib. II. cap. 166, 167.

energy and inventive genius. They had cultivated from of old their garden isle with care, and when their ancient city was injured by an earthquake,[23] they wisely took advantage of the opportunity to found a new one nearer to the sea. Choosing the vicinity of the best natural harbour which they possessed, at incredible cost they enlarged, beautified, and defended it.[24] Trade increased, and art flourished; they had their domestic parties and cabals—as what free or energetic community have not?—but in the main they throve steadily and securely, and the relics of their profuse love of sculpture and architecture are still to be seen where they once lived and toiled.

Epicharmus.

Amid such a people the young Epicharmus grew, and thought, and sighed for fame, and dimly fashioned to himself forms of composition hitherto unknown, whereby the noblest lessons of experience and of abstract truth might be conveyed to the popular mind in a garb of fascination and amusement. To him the Greeks, almost with unanimity, accord the praise of originating the higher species of dramatic representation in verse, distinguished by its more pliant and less serious strain from tragedy, but which the name of comedy, in our sense of the term, very inaccurately describes. For the maturing of his design, Epicharmus for-

[23] Towards the middle of the fifth century B.C.

[24] Diodorus Siculus, Lib. XV. cap. 76.

CHAP. VI.

sook his privileged pursuits, and sought in travel the opportunities of intellectual converse and comparison which the circumscribed knowledge and sympathy of his native place could not afford him. He found in Hiero of Syracuse, apparently, the keenest appreciation of his genius and of his favourite aim; and during his residence there he produced many plays,[25] whose merits, both of sentiment and composition, are still conspicuous in the golden page of Grecian dramatic fame.[26]

Female physicians.

Whatever privileges may have attached to the profession of medicine elsewhere, it is certain that none of an exclusive nature belonged to it at Athens. This is proved by the terms of an ancient law, which forbade women and servants to practise the healing art.[27] At a later period females of education and rank were specially permitted to do so,[28] and they are supposed to have frequently availed themselves of the license, and with eminent success. How strongly such a custom tends to dispel the notion, which certain modern writers have laboured to create, that the Athenian women were condemned to a life of ignorance and seclusion! The fashion of female physicians, like so many others, was borrowed from the Greeks by their ultimate conquerors; and a sepulchral monument at Rome bore a Greek inscription, which preserved till modern

[25] According to the Parian Marbles 472 B.C.

[26] Muller, Dorians, Book IV. c. 3.

[27] Petitus, Leges Att. Lib. III. tit. 8, § 1.

[28] Ibid. § 2.

days the name of Euhodia, a lady of rank who possessed extraordinary skill in medicine.[29]

Apprenticeship.

In most of the professions and arts, if not in all, the habit of apprenticeship was early introduced. Those who studied physic thus sought to qualify themselves.[30] The architects had their pupils, and the elements of painting and sculpture were in the same manner communicated. Young men from far and near came to learn at Athens. Her schools were as open as her bazaars; any one who obeyed the laws, and could name a citizen of Attica as his surety, was free and welcome to learn from her wisest men all they knew. There were no tests, no churlish indisposition to share with those who could not claim the political rights of freemanship, the advantages which the city of Athenè enjoyed. Neither the ways to wealth or wisdom were deemed secret. The Porch and the Academy were open public places: the Labyrinths were in dark Egypt or still darker Crete.

The public schools.

From sunrise until sunset the gymnasia, or public schools, were by law commanded to be kept open.[31] These were in some instances supported by the state,[32] and in all cases were subject to its superintendence and control. Far from neglecting the duties of a government in regard to education, or leaving the youth of Athens to be corrupted or

[29] Petitus, Commentar. p. 388. Wesseling's Edition, Louvain, 1742.

[30] Böckh, Book I. § 21.

[31] Petitus, Leges Att. Lib. III. cap. 7, § 1.

[32] Böckh, Book I. § 21.

CHAP. VI.

misled by improper teachers, the law prohibited, on pain of death, any man to set up a school without the previous permission of the authorities; and many regulations, tending obviously to health and purity of morals, are minutely recorded.[33] The private licensed schools were extremely numerous; and there is abundant proof, in the rarity and difficulty of attempts at interference with the mode of teaching, or the speculative opinions taught, even when most at variance with established notions, that no very inquisitorial censorship was exercised beforehand as to the theories or doctrines held by those who desired to open new places of instruction.

The pupils of Phidias.

The artists necessarily taught in their own studios, and received certain fees for their instruction.[34] An interesting story is told by Pliny of the competition of two pupils of Phidias, which sheds a pleasant, and not useless light on the freedom of intercourse at the time, as well as upon the natural but mischievous tendency of popular judgment to partiality in its decisions in matters of taste, and the just consequence attending it. Alcamenes was an Athenian of eminent skill, and well worthy the teaching of his great master. But Agoracritus, a youth of Paros, was the favourite of Phidias; and in the developement of his immature conceptions, as they struggled for expression, the all-accomplished sculptor felt so deep a sympathy, that he would often lend, unperceived, the aid of his finer chisel to the

[33] Petitus, Lib. III. cap. 8, § 4.

[34] Böckh, Book I. § 21.

work ; as though, when sated with personal praise, he derived a new and exquisite gratification from thus indistinguishably contributing to the glory of his cherished pupil. When the days of their tutelage were ended, and the fire was quenched at which the youthful ambition of the students had been kindled, it was proposed to test their comparative skill by desiring each to design appropriate variations (in attitude and expression we may presume) in the celebrated statue of Venus, which stood in one of the public gardens. The judgment was given by the people, probably in the theatre ; and Alcamenes was declared the victor, not because his suggestions were in reality finer, but because he was an Athenian, and his countrymen leaned to his claims rather than to those of the Parian. Agoracritus soon found a purchaser for his slighted statue, which in bitterness he named Nemesis; he made it a condition, likewise, that it should never be set up within the walls of Athens ; and the stipulation seems to have been observed, for long afterwards Varro found it still preserved with care at the little town of Rhamnus, in whose favour the foolish Athenians had thus cheated themselves. The Roman critic has left us his opinion that in beauty it transcended all others he had seen.[35]

Architects.

Genius in every walk of art was sure of recognition and reward. At Rhodes and Cyzicus the architects who were considered worthy of perma-

[35] Pliny, Hist. Lib. Nat. XXXVI. cap. 5.

CHAP. VI.

nent employment by the state received high salaries;[36] and there is little doubt that those of Athens (for her love of magnificence was not content without many) were still more amply paid.[37] An artist, then, was a coveted treasure. If his abilities were not appreciated in one city, he went to another. There was an honourable jealousy of his services, and, like the eminent practitioners in our courts of law, he could only on his own terms be retained.

Musicians and actors.

Infinite pains were likewise taken to engage musicians of celebrity for even a limited time; and the exaggeration (if such it were) that told how Amœbæus was paid 240*l.* for every night that he sang at Athens,[38] serves at least to shew that the exquisite power to the cultivation of which he, among many, had devoted his time, was valued highly and justly. Nor was the recompense of such men ruled by the bargaining skill of stage-managers. The musician was honoured as an artist; and the artist was recognised as a real benefactor—was respected as an illustrious man—not treated condescendingly as "a professional person." Public funds were probably devoted in all of the free commercial states to the maintenance of the drama and to musical performances. They were regarded as departments of social and intellectual education, and, as such, the state adopted their maintenance as a portion of its most obvious obligations.

[36] Böckh, Book I. § 21.
[37] Thirlwall, ch. 16.
[38] Böckh, Book I. § 21.

Literary rewards.

Equally splendid were the honours and not unfrequently the rewards bestowed on men of letters. Herodotus was awarded for his history a sum of ten talents, or upwards of 2400*l.*, by a decree of the Assembly of Athens;[39] and Pindar, for the celebrated ode, was voted a proportionate sum.[40] Popular pride had, doubtless, been intensely gratified in both instances by the praises lavished upon Attic bravery and patriotism. But what then? Had these been lying vanities, not splendid monuments to real worth, or had their authors been glozing flatterers of the Athenian assembly, not aliens by birth, and still more by their personal character and habits, to the majority of that body,—something might be said against such gifts; though, even then, we should find it difficult to account discreditably for the munificence, whose discrimination the judgment of mankind, after the lapse of two-and-twenty centuries, enthusiastically approves.

Crowns and statues.

For public services, it was customary, in the simpler days of Attic life, to vote chaplets of pine-leaves, a distinction highly prized. When commerce had rendered the precious metals more abundant, crowns of gold, often of considerable value, were substituted.[41] Statues were raised, at the public charge, to Harmodius and to Solon; and, with the progress of art, compliments of this kind became frequent, without apparently ceasing

[39] Plutarch, de Malign. Herod. 26.

[40] Ten thousand drachmas.—Böckh, Book II. § 18.

[41] Ibid.

CHAP. VI.

to be esteemed. Office, with its emoluments and power, rewarded distinguished ability or worth; and when, on the death of Aristides, his family were left unprovided for, his daughters were voted 3000 drachmas each, and an estate was purchased for his son.[42] Every thing tended to the encouragement of individual exertion, without which no man, however opulent or highly-born, could become permanently influential, and with which no man, however humble his origin or circumstances, was forbidden to aspire to the highest trusts the state had to confer.[43]

Merchant statesmen.

The mercantile spirit was not merely recognised as a useful ally of constitutional power, but it was identified thoroughly therewith. The sons of men engaged in trade or manufacture, if they possessed capacity for affairs, took their place in the council and assembly without cavil or objection. Isocrates was the son of a musical-instrument maker, and gave private instructions for high pay in the rhetoric art, of which he was so accomplished a master; Iphicrates, the admiral, was the son of a shoemaker; and the father of Demosthenes was a sword-cutler. Nor was personal attention to mercantile avocations regarded as incompatible with high political station. The case of Solon has been already noticed, and many others might be adduced. Cleon, the successor of Pericles as head of the treasury, was extensively engaged in foreign trade, especially in the import-

[42] Böckh, Book II. § 18.

[43] Heeren, Vol. VI. ch. 13.

ation of leather, whence the jokes of Aristophanes, who caricatured him with a thong in his hand, and nicknamed him "the tanner."[44] Hyperbolus, a man of some note also, was a maker of lamps; and Andocides, by whose energy and skill an attempt to seize the Cyprus fleet, laden with corn, when on its way to Athens, during the war, was baffled, was a foreign merchant.[45] Was it owing to his commercial knowledge or connexions that he was able to do his country this timely service?

Industrial policy; population.

All the eminent men who guided the counsels of Athens in the periods of her growth and vigour, Solon, Pisistratus,[46] Themistocles, Pericles, Conon—all, with one feeling of its transcendant importance, laboured to advance the interests of industry. And this they knew was not to be effected on the scale which they desired without a large population resident in the city or in its immediate neighbourhood. It was this that rendered the resident aliens, who were chiefly engaged in manufactures, foreign commerce, or the different trades, more or less connected with the arts, so important an element in the social and industrial economy of the Athenians.[47]

Resident aliens.

With the industrial growth of the commonwealth, the resident aliens, or, as they were termed, metœci, grew in numbers and consideration. "They were more numerous at Athens than in any other

[44] In Equit. Act I. sc. 2.

[45] Böckh, Book I. § 15. n. 382.

[46] Pisistratus occupied, in more respects than one, the position in the constitutional and commercial history of Athens, that Cromwell did in that of England.

[47] Böckh, Book I. § 8.

CHAP. VI.

state."[48] As contradistinguished from the politically enfranchised class, they may be viewed as permanent denizens of the state. Their properties and persons were guarded by the law with as anxious solicitude as those of the highest citizens. "Justice for all was the same."[49] Certain regulations, it is true, were prescribed, with which they were justly expected to comply. Thus every stranger, who was desirous of being enrolled among the denizens of Athens, was obliged to obtain the permanent guarantee of a citizen to whom he was known, and by whom certain recognisances were entered into for his good behaviour. The resident alien could only possess land in tenantry, the power of absolute purchase being denied him.

Denizenship

Every calling was open to him save the law, the practice of which was so intimately interwoven with political privileges, that none, perhaps, were capable of discharging its peculiar duties with that independence of feeling and of bearing so essential to their due fulfilment, who did not possess a seat and voice in the assembly, to which, from all the ordinary tribunals, the appellate jurisdiction lay; and to this, it is hardly necessary to say, that foreigners who, until formally naturalised, were still the subjects of other states, were ineligible.[50] They paid a moderate annual tax for permission to take up their residence in the city, the reasonableness of

[48] Hermann, ch. 6, § 115.
[49] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. I. tit. 3, § 1.
[50] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 35.

which seems never to have been questioned. It was the easy terms on which the Athenians permitted any inoffensive and upright townsman of some less favoured locality, to partake of the innumerable benefits and pleasures, the slow creation of which had cost themselves and their forefathers so dear. Every resident paid for his license to dwell and trade in Athens twelve drachmas a-year; women paid but half that sum, if their fathers or husbands died; and a mother was held exempt from the tax, when her son became liable to its payment.[51]

Laws of naturalisation.

Over the earlier forms of naturalisation much obscurity hangs. The spontaneous gifts of citizenship, presented under impulses of admiration or gratitude to particular individuals, were, generally speaking, rare, and serve to throw but little light on the more interesting question, whether there existed, as in modern states, any recognised means, whereby a person of no figure or note could acquire, as of right, and not favour, the immunities of the state he wished to adopt for his abode. A rigid exclusiveness characterised several Greek communities, the most opposite in almost every other political sentiment. Sparta only yielded her franchise to a noble soothsayer of Elis and his brother, under the influence of superstitious fears, during the invasion of Mardonius;[52] while the people of Megara boasted that they had never conceded the right of citizenship to any foreigner but Hercules. But Sybaris and

[51] Böckh, Book III. § 7.

[52] Herodotus, Lib. IX. cap. 33.

CHAP. VI.

Athens are said to have acted otherwise; and the interests of Corinth, not to speak of less important mercantile states, tended in the like direction. It would be more consonant, moreover, with the superb air of beneficent condescension which the haughty favourites of Athenè loved to assume, that what their liberality most freely conferred they would not grant upon any application that wore the semblance of a demand.

Industrial hospitality.

But as commerce year by year engaged more of the attention of all classes, and popular appreciation of the freedom, which is unto it the breath of health and life, grew instinctive and habitual, the ancient jealousy of foreigners wore away; and it became a part of the policy of the later statesmen to attach the numerous and opulent metœci by a sense of binding interest and obligation to their adopted country. After a brief probation, all persons who chose to make their permanent abode at Athens were eligible to the citizenship. None were admitted who did not bear a deserving character; but, without distinction, or lineage, or birthplace, "all were declared equal before the law."[53] The introduction of this bold and enlightened policy, ascribed by some to Clisthenes, by some to Aristides, has ever been denounced by all who, in the irrepressible spirit of progressive change which characterised Ionic life, recognise nothing but what they are pleased to term "relaxation of ancient discipline," and the growth of luxury.

[53] Πᾶσι τὰ ἴσα εἶναι.—Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. II. tit. 3, § 6–10.

CHAP. VI.

Happily for Athens, her counsels were governed by men capable of appreciating her character and destiny. In their judgment their country never could feel too much respect for industry—never could possess too exquisite and refined a taste to stimulate that industry to perpetual enterprise and invention, or too many hands endowed with energy and skill to sustain its versatile labours. The temper and condition of the people under this enlightened system of rule are beautifully described by Pericles: "We employ riches as the means of action rather than as matter of idle boast. To confess poverty with us brings with it no disgrace; though not to endeavour to emerge from it by industry were shame indeed. Those who are most attentive to their private duties are the most thoughtful for the public weal; and even among those engaged in agricultural or mechanical pursuits there is a considerable share of political understanding. We are the only people who look on him who takes no part in public affairs, not as an amiable and inoffensive member of society, but as one who is good for nothing."[54]

The spirit of commerce was there. The state was grateful for labour, and shewed its gratitude by every means in its power, by conceding it an honourable rank, and taking care to pay it well.

Rewards of labour.

Nor were the words of Pericles a specious flattery employed to win cheaply the regard of the working classes. The dignity of labour was no

[54] Thucydides, Lib. II. cap. 40; but compare Herod. Lib. II. cap. 166.

CHAP. VI.

philanthropic cant at Athens; no mere sentiment affected by jobbing politicians at public feasts. Labour was not often told it was "really very respectable," in a community where it really felt that it was so without any such assurance. It was respected by the law. Prizes and rewards for inventions or improvements were the workman's right secured by law; they were publicly conferred by the magistrates; and none but working artisans were permitted to contend for them.[55] The origin of this excellent system is curious. Among the many men of genius who, born elsewhere, were drawn by various causes to Athens, and lent the golden hours of their prime to her adornment, the

Hippodamus.

name of Hippodamus, the Milesian, is preserved with peculiar gratitude. When the Athenians felt the need of extending and fortifying their harbour, this man, whose fame as an architect had spread beyond the limits of his native isle, was sent for, and accomplished his task with eminent success. But he had a nobler ambition. He wished not only to leave splendid examples to his pupils of what might be performed in their branch of industry, but he yearned to see his order uplifted to a firmer and more assured position as citizens and as men. Though unskilled in the ordinary rudiments of literature, he composed a work having peculiar reference to the social arrangements of the state; and though the formality of his ideal divisions and distributions of employment was justly

[55] Böckh, Book I. § 8.

treated with neglect, it is infinitely creditable to the Athenians that they adopted more than one of this good man's suggestions, which grew wise and just when he approached those subjects with which he was experimentally acquainted. From beholding the misery into which a young family are thrown by the sudden bereavement of their father, he proposed that the orphans of men who had died in the public service, and especially of soldiers, should be adopted by the state and reared at its expense. And to Hippodamus, as already intimated, belongs the noble institution of public honours and rewards for the working classes.[56]

The slaves.

As the social circles of the more opulent ranks intersected their political classification in an infinitely various manner, so was it also, though in a less degree, among the mass of the working population. Some artificers were citizens, some were resident aliens; the majority were in a condition of servitude. But at Athens, "even the slaves enjoyed no unimportant share of the general freedom, not merely in the circumstance that in daily life little distinguished them from the common citizen, but in consequence of legal enactments;"[57] and there are ample grounds for believing that, under the humiliating appellation of bondage as contradistinguished from free labour, there existed a far wider range of human comfort and security of life

[56] Aristotle, Polit. Lib. II. cap. 5.

[57] Hermann, chap. 6, § 114; Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. II. tit. 6, § 1, &c.

CHAP. VI.

than can be said to be practically possessed by large classes of some modern communities whose rulers are given to boast of the blessings that [rhetorically] appertain to all who have been born under the smile of a higher civilisation.

Degrees of slavery.

The term slavery applied to the bulk of a Greek community in any other than a political sense is, in fact, highly calculated to mislead. Involuntarily, we suffer the accursed sound to conjure up associations of cruelty and degradation, of guilt and misery,—of that sordid blasphemy which denies that in the same image of himself hath God made both oppressor and oppressed, both the victim and his torturer. But between slavery in the sense we are accustomed to think of it and the condition of the bond-servants, whether engaged in domestic or manufacturing labour in Athens, the widest difference prevailed.

Domestic servants.

Herodotus, when relating the quarrel that arose between the Athenians and the people of Hymettus, tells how the latter had insulted the honourable maidens of the city when they went to draw water at the Nine springs; "for," he adds incidentally, "at that period they had no slaves:"[58] the meaning of which is, manifestly, not that bondage was a thing unknown, but that among the middle classes, who formed the bulk of the community, domestic offices were discharged often, perhaps usually, by the daughters of freemen. In every state of Greece captives taken in war were retained in servitude;

[58] Herodotus, Lib. VI. cap. 137.

but their transfer was rendered difficult by the Attic laws.[59] Insolvent debtors might be, and often were, detained for the payment of their debts; but in almost every case the time and labour of the debtor were his own, over and above what was necessary to be employed for his actual subsistence; and his bondage might be terminated by the debt or ransom being paid either out of his own earnings, or by another for him; and on this being done the captive or debtor resumed his original rank and rights.[60]

Increase of the labouring classes.

The progress of society wrought effects apparently the most opposite on the condition of the labouring class. Its most obvious tendency was greatly to increase the number of domestics in every department, and the dependence of their employers upon them. Manufactures and commercial enterprise afforded large returns upon capital; and upon the ordinary interest of moderate accumulations many lived well. The refined luxury in which numbers both of citizens and denizens were enabled, by the skilful investment of their capital, to live, all contributed to cause an extensive demand for every kind of household service.[61] Hence arose mainly the importation from other places of persons chiefly, we may conceive, of what would be termed a better class of servants. As the affectation of leisure spread among even the less opulent of the citizens, the poorest of them "endeavoured to keep one

[59] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. II. tit. 6, § 2.

[60] Wachsmuth, Vol. I. § 33.

[61] Bekker, Charicles, ch. 5.

CHAP. VI.

servant at least for the care of household matters; and in moderate establishments many were employed in all conceivable occupations,—grinding, baking, cooking, &c.; and a person of condition was frequently attended out-of-doors by two or three footmen."[62] Certain kinds of field-labour and many handicraft trades were likewise conducted by them. Mention is often made of wages[63] given to such persons, and from many incidental circumstances we are led to believe that these were not unusual, or inadequate; yet it is asserted in many, perhaps a majority of cases, no pecuniary recompense was given to bondsmen; and the solution of the difficulty appears to lie in the conjecture that the Greeks, who in general were more fastidious than parsimonious, found by experience that the benefits of faithful and willing service were worth paying for, and unattainable without the hope of reward. With the exception of the unfortunate workers in the mines, we have no evidence of a *class* of labourers or servants being treated with inhumanity by the Athenians.

Laws regarding slaves.

If any one struck the servant of another man, his master might bring his action as if the injury had been offered to himself.[64] Slaves, whose master treated them ill, had a right to compel him to transfer them to one who was more humane.[65] A slave could demand his manumission upon payment

[62] Böckh, Book I. § 7.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. II. tit. 6, §§ 1–4.
[65] Τοὶς δούλοις ἐξεῖναι πρᾶσιν αἰτεῖσθαι, καὶ δεσπότίω μεταβάλλειν ἐπιεικεστερον. —Ibid. § 5.

of the sum at which his labour was valued.[66] How this was determined it is impossible to ascertain; but that the law was no dead letter, and that the right was frequently exercised, is unquestionable. Many, also, were emancipated freely by their masters, who thenceforth stood in the relation of patrons to them; and the laws declared those freedmen infamous who failed to cherish and aid their protectors; nor could they apostatise (as it was termed) to new patrons without incurring penalties.[67]

Public opinion regarding them.

The language of the law was precise and imperative which was meant for their protection against injury or hardship: "the wanton ill-treatment of a slave was punished as in the case of a freeman;"[68] and, although numerous proofs might be adduced of individual suffering, it may be truly said, that the tone of public opinion fully sustained the tenour of the laws. The fact, were there no other, that slaves were disqualified by express enactment from sitting as jurors,[69] demonstrates with what comparative leniency they were treated at Athens. In the progress of society the policy adopted towards them became still more liberal. "Although aliens and slaves were long excluded from the assembly, it subsequently became no uncommon thing to admit both of these, by permission of the people, to prefer their own suits, or to com-

[66] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. II. tit. 6, § 6.

[67] Ibid. §§ 8, 9.

[68] Hermann, chap. 6, § 114.

[69] Terentius, in Phorm. Act II. sc. 1, v. 62; Petitus, Leg. Att. Lib. IV. tit. 4, § 10.

CHAP. VI.

plain of any grievous wrong done them by a citizen; or in case of need to consult with the people on particular circumstances."[70] Finally, several public employments of subordinate trust were filled by bondsmen, who were purchased by the state from their private owners, and placed in situations of greater or less confidence and profit according to their merit.[71]

Sacred slaves.

It would lead us too far from our immediate aim to inquire into the various ways in which the hard lot of compulsory servitude was gradually mitigated. The service of the gods, which every year had become more costly and splendid, permanently required a vast number of persons of both sexes to fill the varied parts in its gorgeous ceremonials. He who was purchased for Apollo was thereby redeemed from all other service than that connected with the Delphic shrine; and the *hieroduli*, or sacred slaves, were, probably, in all cases secure against any further transferance,[72] and many other of the ordinary ills of labour.

Slave artisans were often better off in point of physical comforts than the poorer freemen.[73] All these exceptions taken together,—a growing sense of the unprofitableness of unrequited toil,—and a greater disposition to interpose the strong arm of the law between the capricious master and his workman, — must necessarily have conspired to

[70] Schömann, Assemblies of the Athenians, I. 6, 80.
[71] Böckh, Book II. § 11.
[72] Ibid. Book I. § 13.
[73] Hermann, chap. 6, § 114.

ameliorate the condition of the labourer in no slight degree. How far it may have contributed to kindle the belief that bondage might wholly and for ever be abolished, it were hard to say; but it sounds like the half-forgotten voice we have heard in a dream, when we are told that the Phocians abrogated slavery altogether amongst themselves, and upbraided certain of their democratic neighbours with retaining in bondage so many who hindered free artisans from getting work.[74]

Agricultural labourers.

The agricultural labourers of Attica differed essentially from those of the uncommercial states. Besides those of Lacedæmon, there were in Crete, Bœotia, Thessaly, and elsewhere, conquered tribes, who, either from the tenacity wherewith they clung to their early freedom, or from the peculiar institutions of their conquerors, were devoted throughout their generations to agrarian vassalage. They were serfs—*adscripti glebæ*—a distinct race, sentenced in the womb to servitude, and from their numbers looked on with the cruel and unrelenting eye of fear. In Thessaly they were deemed the property of the state, and could not be removed beyond its confines, except as soldiers in time of war. They were called *penestæ*, in remembrance of their poverty; and *menestæ*, because they dwelt still upon their ancient lands. In Crete the distinction was made between the *mniotæ* and the *aphamniotæ*, or indentured serfs, the latter being

[74] Böckh, Book I. § 21, on authority of Athenæus.

CHAP. VI.

hired out by the state to individual proprietors.[75] The origin of their condition was kept in recollection by the term *latreis*, or captives, which was long applied to them; and the phrase *clarotæ* was used in traditional allusion to the circumstance of their being obliged to till the soil which had once belonged to their fathers.

But in Attica the children of the soil had never been degraded thus.[76] The chariot-wheel of Hellenic conquest had passed lightly over them,—wherefore we know not: only the happy after-fact seems clear that nothing resembling helotry darkened the morning of Athenian existence. The fields were in part tilled by the free hands of husbandmen who rented, when they did not absolutely own, their artificially prolific, though often naturally sterile farms.

Natural advantages.

In enumerating the general sources of Athenian greatness, a recent author, with true insight, names "the comparative *unproductiveness* of the soil which forced the inhabitants of Attica to compensate its natural want of fertility by the application of skill and industry."[77] And, however paradoxical the assertion may at first sight appear, it is certainly much nearer to the truth than the opposite theory, which declares the possession of an extensive and prolific territory to be the *only* basis on which

[75] Müller, Dorians, Book III. chap. 4, § 1; Wachsmuth, Book I. § 34.

[76] Isocrates, Pangeyric. 3.

[77] Kanngiesser, Sketch of Athenian History, translated by Mr. J. J. Lockhart, Athens and Attica, Part II. p. 132.

national greatness can be permanently reared.[78] By the help of such advantages Athens at least could never have grown rich, populous, or strong. CHAP. VI.

Peculiarity of the soil.

Unlike the rich glebe of Bœotia, whose surface, owing to the moist atmosphere, was clothed with perennial verdure, the soil of Attica, unequal and light, suggested the popular idea, to which Plato and others allude, that the fatness of the land had been washed away by frequent floods, until little was left but the bones. But though in general unsuited for wheat-crops, and yielding no very extensive pasturage fit for horses or oxen, its fields produced abundantly when sown with maize or barley; innumerable herds of goats browsed on the declivities of Hymettus and Cithæron; and sheep found such plentiful and nutritious herbage on the northern downs, that the flocks of neighbouring communities were driven thither in scarce seasons. On the warm and gravelly hill-sides the vine, and fig, and olive, grew luxuriantly; and on the higher mountains waved forests of natural pine.[79]

Landholding in Attica.

Along the coast the lands were swampy and of little value; but the inland plain of Attica was for ages cultivated with minute economy and garden-like care. To supply the dense population who dwelt within the walls[80] with fruits, vegetables, cheap wine, oil, honey, not to speak of grain, was the

[78] Mitford.

[79] Strabo, Lib. IX. cap. 7.

[80] Two-thirds of the whole population, according to the estimate of Böckh, dwelt in the city, harbour, suburbs, and minories. —Book I. § 7.

CHAP. VI.

business of the suburban farmers. Many of these were registered citizens, for husbandry was at all times regarded with esteem. Some who were opulent enough kept many farm-servants, and the inclination of others led them to prefer a city life; but the number of small estates leads one to believe that a taste for agriculture as a personal occupation was popular, and that the country gentlemen of Attica, like their kinsmen of the town, were an intelligent, progressive, and self-reliant class of the community. Save their own thrift, discernment, and activity, there was nothing for them to rely upon; and had these been wanting, their comparatively poor lands must have speedily and irredeemably gone out of cultivation. For the ports were open, and shipping numerous, and the exhaustless realms of Asia and of Africa practically nigh at hand. Unaccountable though it may seem, we do not find Attic landholders ever calling on their brethren of the city to deal with them exclusively for food. We know that of all Ionic faults diffidence was not one; and there is no symptom of their being deficient in sagacity. How came it, then, that they never tried either to bring the national consumption of corn down to the point which they could supply, or to contrive some method of insuring an artificial price for as much as they were able to bring into market?

Absence of legislative protection.

Two very obvious considerations,—at least considerations that one hopes will one day come to be deemed obvious,—stood in the way of any such

impolicy. It would have injured the commercial classes materially—and they at Athens were the preponderant influence, — and it would not have substantially benefited the agriculturists themselves —for the land was devoted without reserve to produce those things for which it was naturally best adapted, and consequently it was cultivated in the best (economically) possible way,—namely, in that which insured with most certainty a fair price and profit in return for the labour and capital expended upon it.

Value of land.

The general effects of this system, as far as we can judge from the facts within our cognisance, are not a little remarkable. Notwithstanding the diversity of size and number of estates and the facilities of sale and transfer, the price of land did not rise apparently to any thing exorbitant. Böckh has collected several cases where the sums given by purchasers are mentioned; and he inclines to the opinion that a *plethron* of arable land usually brought about fifty drachmas (or somewhat less than forty shillings of our money).[81] The plethron was a superficial measure supposed to have been equal to 9900 English square feet;[82] the cost of an acre (containing 43,560 square feet) would consequently have been somewhat under 9*l.* sterling.[83]

To judge accurately whether such a price was practically and really high or low, we should know

[81] Böckh, Book I. § 11.

[82] Ibid.

[83] The Attic *talent* is generally estimated as having been worth about 241*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*; the *mina*, 4*l.* 0*s.* $6\frac{2}{3}d.$; the *drachma*, $9\frac{2}{3}d.$; the *obolus*, $1\frac{7}{12}d.$; and in the obolus there were eight *chalci*.

CHAP. VI.

the price of a vast variety of other things which were at the time in general demand. Some things were probably as dear as in modern times; horses, for example. But labour was cheap; the cost of building, from the proximity of good quarries and the free importation of every kind of timber, was moderate; and provisions of all the ordinary descriptions were purchaseable at rates much lower than similar articles have been sold at during the last two centuries, in London, Paris, or Amsterdam. On the whole, therefore, it seems probable that land in Attica maintained a fair and reasonable value.[84]

Desire to purchase land.

Another and more definite estimate, however, may be made on this subject, and that is with regard to the desire manifested in later times to invest capital in landed property. Circumstanced as the inhabitants of Athens were, this appears to furnish a conclusive test of the accuracy of the views already stated; for if the circumstance of the unrestricted importation of grain into a country whose soil was of inferior corn-growing quality had had the tendency to throw any considerable quantity of land out of general cultivation, it is hardly conceivable, that as the mischievous consequences of neglect and disuse had become apparent and aggravated, the desire of wealthy persons to purchase larger farms than formerly should have arisen. Yet we find that "it was not until the time of Demosthenes that individuals purchased much landed property."[85]

[84] Böckh, Book I. § 11.

[85] Ibid.

CHAP. VI.

Export duty on marble.

Marble hewn from the mountains of Pentelus and Hymettus was exported in large quantities, subject to a moderate duty.[86] In prosperous times, when public buildings were going forward throughout every part of Greece, the demand for marble must have been constant and considerable. Had the duty been raised to such a point as materially to affect the price, the quarries of Paros and other places would have obtained an exclusive preference, and those of Attica would have been neglected. We hear of nothing, however, which would lead us to suspect any thing of this sort; and the huge cavities in the sides of the Pentelic hills remind the traveller still of the laborious and no doubt lucrative quarryings that were once carried on there.

Socrates and Aristarchus.

Some insight into the social and industrial ideas of the Athenians is afforded by a pleasant dialogue related by Xenophon, as having taken place between Socrates and an amiable friend of his who appears to have belonged to the independent class who, possessed of intelligence and moderate fortune, constituted, doubtless, an invaluable element of Ionic society. In a time of general depression, the result of protracted war and insecurity, from which industry had not as yet revived, and by reason of which the rents of houses had fallen comparatively to nothing, Aristarchus is introduced deploring the badness of the times and the difficulty of supporting the numerous relations who looked to him for assistance in their necessity. The philosopher asks how their neighbour Ceramo managed, for he seemed to have as

CHAP. VI.

large an establishment, and yet to be doing well in the world. Aristarchus explains that Ceramo's household consisted altogether of work-people and servants. "And which, may I ask," says Socrates, "do you think worthy of more regard, Ceramo's bond-servants or your free relations? and if you deem the latter so superior a class, is it not indeed a shame that they should only help to beggar you, while the contemned labourers of our neighbour are creating the means of their own support and making their employer rich at the same time?"[86] Aristarchus hereupon reminds his adviser that all persons of the working classes were carefully brought up to some particular craft or trade, whereby they were always able, provided their master had the means of setting them at work, to contribute to his advantage and their own; and he instances different cases of individuals of their acquaintance, whose incomes were mainly derivable from the employment they gave to a number of hands skilled as clothiers, bakers, and so forth: but his relations unfortunately were of the upper classes, and had never been brought up to any business. Socrates very characteristically intimates, that as his friend is not rich enough to support such a following in idleness, the sooner he sets about giving them something to do the better. "Is it because they happen to be born of respectable parents and are your relations, that they are to do nothing but eat

[86] Memorab. Socrat. II. 7.

and sleep? Do you believe that persons so circumstanced really spend happier lives than those who by their own industry earn a subsistence for themselves and their families? Or do you imagine that idleness tends to make one wise, or to the acquisition of either bodily health or genuine independence of mind? Surely it is a bad sign of a man when he refuses active occupation; for which is more reasonable and right, the making some effort to turn what we know to good use and exerting the faculties nature has given us; or, with folded arms, sitting like men in a dream, or nervelessly thinking how many other people are contributing the while to our support? And as for these connexions of yours, depend upon it they will ere long discover that you think them a sad burden; and then distrust will mutually arise between you: on their part every thing like gratitude will die away, and on yours all true affection. But if you will only set about giving them something useful to do, and encourage and help them in it, you will find, in the end, that they will respect you more lastingly and love you far better."[87] CHAP. VI.

Philosophy of industry.

The good effects of following this advice are next described. Aristarchus goes to buy wool and whatever was necessary for its manufacture. Then he goes to his indigent relations and proposes the plan to them. "And they all *cheerfully* assented and soon became comfortable and happy, because

[87] Xenophon, ut supra.

CHAP. VI.

they were thenceforth busy from morning till night." Nor should the last scene in this vivid sketch of Attic life be forgotten. After a time the persons thus served are described as waxing conceited and ungrateful. They began to think, probably that after all Aristarchus had done a very wise thing for himself; for, being his relations, he could hardly have let them starve; but now he had actually contrived a way of making them subservient to his pecuniary gain: and they began to say amongst themselves, that really they worked a great deal too hard, while, as for their employer, he did nothing. Once more, therefore, Aristarchus tells his perplexities to his stoic friend, and proceeds to recount the murmurs and complaints of his people. "Go back and tell them the story of the sheep and the dog. The sheep complained, once upon a time, that while the dog produced no wool, he was better fed than they, who got nothing but what they could nibble off the ground for themselves. 'Hold your silly tongues!' said the dog; 'it is *not* for nothing I get my share; for if it was not for me, where would yours be? If I stood not sentinel, keeping my eyes about to watch every approach of evil, you would not long be left in peace, or have a morsel to put into your mouths."[88] The tone of sentiment and feeling which pervades the entire of this little narrative is highly suggestive. It reveals very clearly the general disposition of society towards

[88] Xenophon, ut supra.

industry, else the proposition of Aristarchus would have met, in the first instance at least, with some expression of dissatisfaction or surprise; it serves to shew that persons of wealth and station were not averse to becoming employers; and it tends strongly to fortify the belief, that neither the occupations nor condition of the bondsmen were so widely different as we are apt to suppose from those of the free working classes.

Prices. Prices in general are said to have doubled between Solon's time and that of Demosthenes; but their progressive rise during that interval, far from being steady or gradual, was marked by wide and capricious fluctuations. Nothing in the nature of an average computation for any number of years can be obtained; and periods when gold and silver were most abundant do not manifest the general effect on prices which one would expect therefrom. It were at first view "natural to suppose," says Böckh, "that prices must have been low, as the rate of wages was moderate, and there existed a complete freedom of industry; but to counterbalance these there was extensive exportation, which, together with the high rate of interest, and the proportionally high profits of merchants and manufacturers, tended to keep up the prices of commodities."[89]

The precious metals. While the total quantity of gold in Greece was considerably greater after the time of Themistocles

[89] Böckh, Book I. § 8.

CHAP. VI.

than it had previously been, its specific value or price, measured by the same weight of silver, did not rise in proportion. The great increase of commerce necessarily demanded an extended currency. That of Athens long maintained so high a character for purity abroad, that it was generally exchangeable at a premium.[90] It thus became in some degree the circulating medium of many trading communities, as well as that whose image and superscription it bore. There is no reason to suppose that the coinage of Corinth or Ægina was unworthy of the high commercial character of those states, but that of Athens, from her wider sphere of influence and more varied mercantile connexions, was more generally employed. Every state of any importance, however, had its own peculiar coinage, both of gold and silver; and to supply the wear of these, more especially of the former, the annual consumption must have been great, no other currency than that of the metals being known.[91] A considerable source of constant consumption both of gold and silver, moreover, was that required for ornaments, utensils, and works of art, especially for sacred offerings.[92] The gifts of the Chersonesians to the Athenian people were valued at sixty talents; and the worth of the votive crowns preserved in the Acropolis can only form the glittering theme of modern conjecture.

The cost of living.

Socrates, hearing one of his friends exclaim

[90] Polybius, Lib. XX. cap. 15–26; Xenoph. De Vect. 3.

[91] Böckh, Book I. § 8.

[92] Ibid.

how wondrously dear things were at Athens,—the metretes (about ten gallons) of Chian wine costing one mina, and a cotyla (about five-eighths of a pint) of honey five drachmas, the philosopher brought him to a meal-shop, and shewed how much of the best flour could be had for an obolus,—obviously very cheap; then he took him to the fruiterer's, where they saw that a chænix of the best olives could be purchased for two chalci,—certainly a very low price; finally, he led him to the clothier's, to satisfy him that ordinary garments were not expensive, a good coat being offered for sale at ten drachmas:—thus persuading him that Athens was not so expensive a place of residence as he had supposed.[93] CHAP. VI.

Necessaries and luxuries.

The apparent anomaly is easily explained. Necessaries were usually cheap and plentiful, because industry was every where skilful and mature, while foreign competition kept prices down; and, as regarded food, domestic agriculture was every where esteemed, and followed with improving care and ingenuity; while the ports, being always open, the supply was as abundant as political wisdom could secure. But certain luxuries were at the same time exceedingly dear at Athens, because within its walls attractions of society, art, and pleasure, such as could be found in combination nowhere else, were concentrated, so as to induce numbers of persons belonging to other communities, whose wealth enabled them to live where they pleased, to fix their

[93] Plutarch, De Anim. Tranquil. 10.

CHAP. VI.

residence there. All whom love of ostentation or refined luxury rendered lavish in their expenditure flocked to Athens as the high place of enjoyment and the centre of fashion. As a matter of course, the price of choice viands, novel inventions, and rarities of a thousand sorts, rose to the level of their prodigality; and as long as Athens continued to be in vogue as a delightful place of residence, these prices were more or less steadily sustained. But Socrates knew that by all this the substantial condition of the mass of the industrious community was little effected; and he justly reproved the thoughtlessness of his pupil by reminding him, that general inferences regarding society can never be correctly drawn from the striking but comparatively unimportant phenomena on its surface.

CHAPTER VII.

ATTIC WAYS AND MEANS.

"SOCRATES. — Are you desirous, then, my Euthydemus, to possess that knowledge which makes the wise statesman or economist, which qualifies a man to have a voice in the business of the state, and which enables him to serve both himself and others?

"EUTHYDEMUS.—That is indeed the knowledge which I am most anxious to attain, and which I diligently seek after.

"SOCRATES.—Of a truth it is a worthy pursuit, and might well be called a royal science, for kings have an especial need thereof."[1]

As all taxes derived at Athens their sanction either from the tacit acquiescence or mandatory vote of the legislature, and as every item of expenditure was subject to its control, a clear understanding of the popular constitution, were such attainable, would necessarily impart a deeper interest and invest with more practical worth the financial results, whether of income or outlay which history records. Something of its means of obtaining a revenue we know, and something of its ways of expenditure; but of it — the taxing body, or its manner of procedure in that all-important matter,

[1] Xenophon, Memorab. Socrat. 5.

CHAP. VII.

we unfortunately are without either adequate or precise information. The interest attached to the legislative assemblies of Attica in a political point of view has led to varied and minute research,[2] not without curious and important results, though it must be confessed that all the information we possess is still but fragmentary and incomplete.

Taxes under the kings and æsymnetæ.

From the gradual manner in which wealth arose in Greece, and the industrial freedom which at once created it and secured its enjoyment, the tendency towards indirect rather than direct taxation was natural and just. The direct impositions of the primitive times were few and inconsiderable. Royalty and religion had certain domains appropriated for their maintenance;[2] and the few offices beside that then existed were held as honorary distinctions. Nor did it consist with the earlier conceptions of a purely aristocratical polity, that the affairs of state should be administered by paid functionaries. With the æsymnetæ in all likelihood arose opposite feelings. Many of these officers were literally "grand pensionaries" of the commonwealth. The commons wanted a protector, and would have their ablest man for such; but sometimes he was a poor man,—he must be paid. Other offices, moreover, grew necessary,—not all at once, but in progress of time, which in Greece meant the progress of wealth, of intercourse of complex relations betwixt man and man, of still

[3] Schömann, Assemblies of the Athenians; Wachsmuth, Hist. Antiq. of the Greeks; Hermann, Polit. Antiq. &c. &c.

more complex relations between the subjects of different states. Under the constitutional commonwealths many officials became indispensable, and of these the majority received remuneration. Some of the tyranni attempted to impose a property-tax, and it is supposed to have formed one of the chief causes of their unpopularity and their overthrow.

Legislative taxation.

Instead of meeting each new requirement by a new tax upon property, the constitutional governments of Greece provided for the charge by an unfelt, and therefore unopposed, addition to the taxes on consumption. If extending commerce needed a large naval force to protect it, let its increased imports and exports contribute to the burden so entailed. If the multiplication of mercantile dealings rendered the erection of separate tribunals necessary for the peculiar protection of those concerned in trade,[3] let the suitors who sought their protection contribute in fees, and the defaulters made amenable to their authority in fines, to the maintenance thereof. We easily discern in the institutions of Solon, and their subsequent modification by Clisthenes and Aristides, the wise and progressive adaptation of laws to the growing wants and claims of society.

The rating.

Solon, whose twofold aim was popular industry and popular freedom, urged, with profound wisdom, that each must depend for its progress and security

[3] Böckh, Book I. § 9.

CHAP. VII.

upon the other. He desired to exclude none from the acquisition of political right by a barrier that should dishearten or abash him; and he therefore gave the franchise to all who were rated at a very moderate sum. On the other hand, he wished to stimulate exertion, by rendering necessary a higher qualification for certain offices, and for seats in the senate of Five Hundred, with whom lay the powers of initiating laws, and of revising the hasty acts of the more popular body, as well as the especial care of all matters of finance.[4] It may readily be imagined, that while population was scanty, commerce limited, and money scarce, a fourfold classification, founded upon rating and the suitable proportionment of taxation amongst them, answered the simple purposes of the time. The ordinary necessities of the state were few, and their supply was easily adjusted to the capability of the different orders.[5] "As the rights were different according to the classes, so were the burdens." Military and judicial services (with probably few exceptions) were matters of privilege and honour, not of pay; there were as yet no costly fleets, no colonial garrisons, no distant expeditions to be equipped or maintained; votes in the assembly were of comparatively little value, and the obligations of property and station were an onerous charge. It is supposed that the rating indicated the maximum amount at which persons belonging to each class

[4] Böckh, Book II. § 3.

[5] Compare Schömann, Introd. and Hermann, chap. 3, § 10.

could be taxed when necessary,—not an annual sum paid; and that this taxable liability was fixed at two per cent on the gross sum which each individual's property would bring if sold at its value.[6]

But when the influence of Solon's policy began to be felt in increased trade and industry, new wealth became palpable and taxable.[7] Was it not fair that it should be taxed as well as land? Did it not share the same benefits of law and order,—its possessors the same securities and liberties as those whose burdens were assessed according to the produce of their fields? For this some mode of indirect taxation were requisite, and, though we cannot trace its date or form, it is not unimportant to observe, that no period of the commercial history of Attica can be assigned at which it can with confidence be said that certain impositions in the nature of customs or excise duties did not exist.

Extension of the suffrage.

How far the extension of the taxes to movable property, and the adoption of a part of the burdens of the state by commerce and manufactures, was a cause or a consequence of the gradual extension of the suffrage, we possess no adequate means of determining. But their correlative tendency is too plain to be overlooked. If a new class had grown

[6] The calculations on which this estimate is founded are very fully and lucidly given by Böckh, Book IV. § 5.

[7] "Property, according to the language of the Athenian law, was divided into apparent and non-apparent, or rather into immovable and movable,—*οὐσία φανερὰ* and *ἀφανὴς*."—Böckh, Book IV. § 4.

CHAP. VII.

up in the midst of the ancient possessors of houses and lands, able, and not unwilling to contribute their share to the revenue, what could be more reasonable than that they should demand a participation in the power by which it was applied? The inventive or energetic man, who was adding new wealth to the state, might not possess — often, doubtless, did not possess—the beneficial interest derivable from fixed property which had hitherto been the test of eligibility to political trusts. His property was in ships and merchandise, — movable, (*chattel* as we should say)—not always readily or advantageously convertible into immovable or *real* property. Yet the profits derivable from this commercial property was as reasonable an object of taxation as the profit accruing from house-rent or husbandry. The institutions of Solon for their own preservation stood in need, to a certain extent, of modification; and it is far from improbable that the changes by which Clisthenes and Aristides are commonly said to have perverted his earlier system, would have met with his approval had he seen and felt the new state of things which had arisen. The silence of ancient writers, as to disputes between the mercantile and landed interest in Attica, goes far in corroboration of the view which has been suggested, and which leads us to believe that, by the timely adaptation of institutions to the novel claims and aspirations of industrial life,[8] society was saved

[8] Thucydides, Lib. II cap. 37

from so fertile a source of distraction and evil as the social conflict of great classes, whose true interests must have been substantially, not opposite, but one and the same.

Customs and excise.

In the contemplation of Athenian statesmen customs and excise were regarded as serviceable only for the same purpose, namely, that of revenue; and in general the rate of imposition was characterised by the two first of fiscal virtues, impartiality and moderation. Thus all goods, of whatsoever kind, imported into Attica paid a duty called the Hundredth,—because it was a tax of one per cent *ad valorem*; this was applied chiefly to the expense of the harbours. All descriptions of merchandise were further subject to a stated charge for warehousing, which none, probably, but those who reaped the benefit of the accommodation permanently provided for that purpose, paid.[9] The general tax, denominated the Fiftieth, being two per cent *ad valorem* upon all articles of either import or export, went into the public exchequer. The Fiftieth was levied at the inland frontiers with the same indiscriminating universality. A further impost was levied in like manner upon all sales of goods,[10] and for revenue only: as though the fiscal policy of Athens aimed at adjusting the pressure of state burdens, not only to those who presumeably were able to make purchases, or were likely to realise profits, but to the periods when such transfers

[9] Böckh, Book III. § 4.

[10] Ibid. § 5.

CHAP. VII.

of property of various kinds took place. How far the end was actually attained, or in what respects countervailing evils were produced by the working of such a law, we know not; neither is the nominal rate of the duty itself capable of definition.

Liturgies.

But with a more ambitious and warlike policy came direct taxes also. These were generally borne by those classes of the community who enjoyed considerable incomes arising out of actual property in money or land; the purposes to which they were applied were rigidly defined; and the manner in which the direct tax was paid by each individual was made a source of honourable pride and distinction. All citizens rated as possessors of actual property exceeding three talents [11] (somewhat about 785*l.*) were liable to the burden of what were termed the Liturgies. The variety of these singular charges upon property for the public service, implying a wide diversity of pecuniary obligation, would seem to warrant the supposition that the legal cost, at least of those which were of ordinary recurrence at stated intervals, was light in comparison with the sums lavished on such occasions by the ostentatious or ambitious. In no other way can we reconcile the instances of prodigal expense that are occasionally mentioned with the general mediocrity of incomes in the class amongst whose members, in a kind of elective rotation, these honourable burdens fell, and

[11] Böckh, Book IV. §§ 5–6.

absence of complaint regarding them. The truth appears to be, that many of the liturgies imposed for civil and religious objects were cheerfully performed in a sort of municipal duty which entailed a certain inoppressive degree of outlay, fully compensated by the temporary distinction it afforded to persons emulous for the most part of nothing more, and capable of taking no higher place in the routine of public life.[12] Certain sacred rites were thus supported. Most of the popular amusements, more especially those of a musical description, were aided and illustrated by similar means. Innocent and instructive amusement for the many was an essential and invariable object of Greek government. The drama was a great means of popular education, and even the Dorians[13] took much care that its character should be sustained for dignity and lustre; how much more the Ionic communities, with their cultured taste and democratic tendency. The chorus —that singular and imposing adjunct of ancient tragedy—became a study of consummate art, and a means of exquisite display. A man of fortune seeking popularity could do nothing more certain of rendering him acceptable to the great mass of his fellow-citizens than by availing himself of the opportunity when he was appointed by his ward to act as choregus, to provide for the tragic poet a powerful and perfectly trained chorus. The other

[12] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. III. tit. 4, § 1, 2. Aliens were strictly forbidden to perform any of these duties.—Ibid. §§ 3, 4.

[13] Müller, Dorians, Book IV. chap. 4.

CHAP. VII.

expenses of the theatre were otherwise defrayed. The house itself was built by the state; a small payment by each person at the entrance reimbursed the manager for his multifarious, but still, as compared with modern notions, frugal outlay. Government sometimes rewarded the poet, sometimes the actor. But the chorus was, it is believed, in every case furnished by the liturgy of some particular class or district.[14]

Trierarchies

More onerous and changeable, but also conferring more distinction and power, was the trierarchy, which, despite of many incongruous associations, one is tempted to call ship-money. Every citizen of a certain (but no longer ascertainable) rating of property was liable in his turn to be called on to supply a trireme or man-of-war, fully equipped and armed for the defence of the state. This, like all other liturgies, implied personal service,[15] and admitted of substitution by private arrangement; nor was this a matter of difficulty: there seldom lacked enterprising and aspiring individuals in such a community as Athens to seek the posts of costly distinction which the weak-minded or embarrassed wished to shun. There were about sixty of the ordinary or civil liturgies in the year; the trierarchies, or extra taxes, depended, of course, on war.

The same individuals could not be called on at the same time to perform two liturgies;[16] yet the

[14] Böckh, Book III. § 22.
[15] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. III. tit. 4, § 7–13.
[16] Ibid. tit. 5, § 1.

assumption of several charges of this kind at one and the same time was far from rare. Men who had fitted out their ships of the line, and served on board of them during the summer, came home to superintend the costly training of a numerous choir intended for the winter festivals. In Pericles' time the weight of such obligations does not startle us; and so long as the funds of the *synteleia* were available we hear nothing of the pressure of the *symmoria*.[17] Far from suffering from excessive taxation, the wealthier classes in Attica may then be regarded as having practically had infinitely fewer impositions to bear than the middle ranks of modern days; and the working population, save in so far as they contributed to the indirect charges already noticed, may almost be considered as living tax-free.

Income and expenditure.

It were hardly just to measure Athenian income and expenditure generally by the dimensions they assumed during Pericles' administration, still more unjust would it be to admit into any average estimate the exhausting drain upon the national resources that lasted during the Peloponnesian war. The ensuing period, though far from exempt from the sins of profusion caused by needless warfaring and an intermeddling foreign policy, presents a more practically useful field of inquiry. Its duration also was greater than both the preceding epochs taken together. All the great influences which affected Grecian industry and intercourse, polity and

[17] Böckh, Book IV. § 7.

CHAP. VII.

manners, were then in their full maturity; and one, at least, of infinite importance—the dissemination throughout the upper and middle classes of philosophical knowledge and opinions—tended to give a scientific cast to political inquiries, and a wish for something like precision in the statement of their results that in more romantic days would not have won popular attention. The anxious care so obvious in Thucydides to give accurate numbers upon all occasions, indicates a different mood of the public mind from that which Herodotus satisfied, with much looser and more startling, though, it must be confessed, seldom disproved, assertion.

Property-taxes.

It is believed, with apparently good reason, that no general property-tax was ever imposed in

428 B.C.

Attica before the siege of Mitylene. By some this has been questioned, but only because traces of an assessment somewhat similar are supposed to be discernible at few and distant intervals. None contend that it was recognised as an ordinary source of revenue previous to that fatal epoch. Even then it was imposed only as a war-tax, and not until the Allied treasury had been exhausted, and the combination against Athens had compelled her to equip and keep afloat during an entire summer two hundred and fifty triremes. The facility which it afforded, however, of suddenly raising supplies to meet the exigencies of the hour, rendered its recurrence more and more frequent as the difficulties of the state were multiplied, and its pristine maxims of thrift and frugality obscured. Nominally, its

weight fell proportionably upon all classes and degrees; but, as the proportion was assessed by rating, and as the rating took cognisance only of tangible property, whether fixed or movable, many escaped with an insignificant contribution who, as we shall hereafter see, maintained themselves partly, if not altogether, by the idle and pernicious meddling with public affairs, which tended at once to entail additional charges on the state, and to yield those persons a species of income that eluded the taxation which was needful to defray them.

Benevolence.

The term "benevolence" in fiscal matters, though it belongs to another epoch, suggests, more correctly than any English word perhaps, the associations that were connected with the discharge of the Liturgies. "It was the duty of every man of property to render gifts to the state; none should be exempt save the descendants of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, and the nine Archons. Nor should the people be at liberty to extend this exemption from gifts to others, even if asked to do so: nay, whosoever was found guilty of such a request should be disgraced, with all his family."[19] The gifts to the commonwealth were registered.[20]

General spirit of taxation.

With this exception, however, the Athenian taxes were framed and imposed in a true spirit of financial equity. Exemptions were so rare, that

[19] Ὅπως ἂν πλουσιώτατι λειτουργοῦσι, μηδένα ἀτελῆ εἶναι, πλὴν τῶν ἀφ' Ἁρμοδίου καὶ Ἀριστογειτονος, καὶ τῶν ἐννέα Ἀρχόντων. Μηδὲ τὸ λειπὸν ἐξεῖναι τῷ δήμῳ αἰτηθέντι διδοναι. Εἰ δέ τις ἁλῶ αἰτων, ἄτιμον αὐτὸν εἶναι καὶ οἰκίαν, καὶ ὑποκεῖσθαι γραφαῖς, καὶ ἐνδείξεσιν.—Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. III. tit. 6, § 8.

[20] Ibid. § 9.

CHAP. VII.

Demosthenes said they detracted nothing from the revenue; and it is almost superfluous to remark, that the exceeding moderation of the customs-duties, which even in the emergencies of war time were seldom altered, must have nearly altogether precluded the existence of smuggling, and the innumerable evils of which it is the fruitful parent. Athens never levied any duties so high as to be oppressive. "The customs and excise were inconsiderable compared with other countries: there was no restraint on industry" of any kind; but, on the contrary, every care was taken to foster and encourage it.[21]

Other sources of revenue.

There were several sources of Athenian revenue beside those furnished by taxation. The public domains, cultivated by tenants, who paid a given rent; the mines, which were in like manner farmed out, but to a more opulent description of persons; the judicial fines, and the produce of confiscation, which in certain cases was the penalty attached to violations of the law. Of the last-mentioned a very exaggerated estimate appears to have been formed. Cases of hardship and oppression, no doubt, may be adduced in proof of the defective administration of justice during the later periods of the commonwealth; but it is absurd to suppose that the produce of confiscations in a state of small territorial extent like Athens could have ever formed a regular source of considerable revenue.

[21] Böckh, Book IV. § 2.

CHAP. VII.

Silver mines.

In Laurium the silver-mines had been opened in very remote times, if not by Phœnician colonists, probably with the aid of some of their workmen who were experienced in such operations. The produce of these mines, up to the time of Themistocles, was divided among the citizens; but, on the approach of danger, that able statesman persuaded the people to surrender their individual advantage in order to increase the available stock of the commonwealth. The public exchequer is supposed to have gained by this "benevolence" (as it would have been termed in other days) about eight thousand pounds a-year.[22] Making all due allowance for the excessive value of the precious metals in Greece in the reign of Darius, it seems wholly irrational to ascribe to the possession of the silver-mines the importance which has been sometimes done. As an easy and secure source of revenue, applicable to a particular purpose, the amount which they yielded was politically of consequence. While the war lasted, and the powerful fleets of Phœnicia, in the Persian service, swept the Ægean Sea, commerce must have been seriously interrupted, and the revenue derivable therefrom greatly diminished; and direct imposts on a community who were called upon to abandon their homes and fields to the spoiler could have yielded little. In such an emergency the produce of the silver-mines was un-

[22] Jacob, Historical Enquiry into the Production and Consumption of the Precious Metals, Vol. I. p. 73.

CHAP. VII.

doubtedly of importance, small though the amount appears to have been. But to imagine that, when previously distributed as a joint-stock perquisite or dividend among several thousand persons, it could have materially stimulated industry or traffic, seems alike at variance with any reasonable estimation of its actual amount, and with the analogy of a similar progress of things elsewhere. We know of no industrial people the origin of whose wealth is traceable to their possession of mines of gold or silver; and it is not improbable that, if we possessed adequate means of forming a comparative calculation, we should find that the Greeks were infinitely more indebted to the mines of lead and copper which their country contained than to its vaunted and overvalued veins of silver.[23]

Synteleia.

The least creditable, and eventually the least profitable source of revenue was the surplus appropriated by Athens to her own use out of the synteleia, or treasury of the allies. In Pericles' time this fund amounted yearly to six hundred talents, and was popularly said to be contributed by one thousand city-states owing a confederate fealty to Athens, and rated according to the comparative estimate of their wealth and consequence originally formed by Aristides. During the reckless administration of Alcibiades, the rate was arbitrarily

[23] Böckh, with his usual elaborate care, has collected all the materials that exist on the subject of the working and produce of the silver-mines of Laurium, to which he has devoted a separate essay.—See, also, his account of the gold-mines of Thasos and Scapte Hyle, Book III. § 3.

doubled,[24] and it was for a short period raised to the extent of 1300 talents. Their ruinous expenditure, however, outran their extortion; and of sheer necessity they resorted to a bold and striking measure, whose wise simplicity, had it been earlier adopted, might possibly have saved them from many ills. This was nothing less than a commutation of the tribute paid by the allies into a general customs-duty. Instead of a contingent measured by valuation, as formerly, to be paid by each state, a customs-duty of five per cent *ad valorem* appears to have been levied during the remainder of the war upon all goods exported from, or imported into, any part of the confederate realm. The history of this truly memorable measure is unfortunately lost. History can afford it but a single sentence,[25] — having an unusual number of battles, and other immortal mischiefs, just about that time to record. But for us, this first attempt of a great and diversified confederacy of industrial communities to establish such a fiscal system, is full of meaning and teaching if we will heed and learn. Verily there is nothing new under the sun—not even a Zollverein.

CHAP. VII.

Zollverein.

A brief experience of what Sparta meant by guaranteeing their independence taught many of the minor states to repent their desertion of Athens. Her insolence and extortion seemed to have been expiated by the terrible reverses she had undergone,

Sparta and Athens.

[24] Böckh, Book III. § 14.

[25] Thucydides, Lib. VII. cap. 28.

CHAP. VII.

and her sins were half-forgiven, half-forgotten, in the resentment and disgust which the Lacedæmonian garrisons every where inspired. Some of the isles, feeling themselves strong, held on their self-reliant way, resolved to be the vassals of neither; but many also came gradually to terms again with their old metropolitan; and Athens, recovering spirit and daring under the guidance of Conon, Iphicrates, and Timotheus, did not scruple to fling the sword of her ascendancy into the scale of the wavering. But adversity had taught her little.

Fees to the dicasts.

Among the permanent charges on the Athenian exchequer, one of the most remarkable was the payment of the dicasts or jurors, which, in the days of Aristophanes, amounted to 150 talents,[26] or 36,000*l*. Popular forms of jurisdiction were of great antiquity at Athens; but for a long time the popular tribunals had exercised their functions without payment—if we except the salary which, no doubt, was paid to the officer who in each court acted in the capacity of an assessor, or rather it would seem as chairman of each judicial assemblage. Causes of different descriptions were heard in different courts. The distribution of duty was easy and natural. For Attic suits Attic citizens were never wanting to act as legal arbiters. Payment was unthought of, for the casual requirements of such an office were not felt to be a burden. But with the affectations and fallacies of empire all

[26] Vesp. Act II. sc. 1.

this was changed. Jurisdiction in a great variety of matters was assumed by the central courts of Athens; and it was exercised in cases where even both the litigants were citizens of an allied state. It is not unlikely that, when first for political objects the business of these courts was suddenly increased, some difficulty was found in procuring at all times a sufficiently numerous attendance; a system of fines for non-attendance, and even the closing of certain places of business upon occasions of peculiar importance, had been tried without effect; and the expedient of fees may have thus originated in a desire to render these assemblies of judicature as unobjectionable as from their nature they were capable of being made.[27]

Judicial monopoly.

From casual appeals—probably in the nature of voluntarily solicited arbitrations—the desire of adjudicating upon every kind of suits arose. To the manifest injury of the allied states, Athens usurped the jurisdiction over them; and the number of causes was thereby so much augmented, that there were more to decide at Athens than in the whole of Greece beside.[28] Every citizen had, by the constitution, the right of sitting as often as he would upon the numerous juries whereby all suits were determined.[29] Suits accumulated, justice was delayed, the citizens were indifferent and irresponsible, and the provincials murmured loudly. To

[27] Schömann, chap. 4, p. 57.

[28] Böckh, Book II. § 14.

[29] "The entire number competent to act as heliasts was six thousand, but of these not more than three or four hundred, probably, took part in any particular case."—Thirlwall, chap. 11.

CHAP. VII.

remedy the evil, recourse was had to the expedient of paying every juror by the day. From that hour the administration of colonial justice became a regular trade, and was followed as an auxiliary means of easy livelihood.[30] "Nearly the third part of the citizens sat as judges every day."[31]

Perversion of the jury system.

This step in the downward path of ruin never could be afterwards retraced. The well-working of the original institution of the heliæa, as it was founded by Solon, depended altogether on the check which he relied on mutual interest imposing upon corrupt decisions, and the opportunity which an intimate acquaintance with local character and usage can alone supply to "jurors of the vicinage." Men who, in a limited community, are the arbiters of each other's rights and fortunes have an inalienable motive to judge righteously, and to resist the entrance of venality or injustice. A man is not cheaply bribed to wrong his neighbour in a way so liable to detection as a judicial fraud. And so it was at Athens. In the clear and healthy morning of her life, the tribunals were confessedly incorrupt; and not until the going down of that sun which had lit up the whole free countenance of Greece, do we hear of a different state of things. It was when the idea of Solon in creating such a tribunal was forgotten in the panting lust of power, that the self-conservating principle of mutual judgment failed. Strangers were become the majority of the suitors,

[30] Aristophanes, Aves, Act III. sc. 7; Vesp. Act II. sc. 1.

[31] Böckh, Book II. § 14.

and distant lands the scene of their disputes; or, still worse, the conflicts to be adjusted were between influential members of the ascendant state and unknown citizens of a suspected tributary. Picture the poor man, as he came from far, disheartened and alone, to plead his cause before an indifferent, fastidious, and unaccountable tribunal. His adversary meets him confidently and with scorn—reckons how many friends he has upon the jury, and with his tribe of ready witnesses defies his opponent to the proof: they stand unequal on the very threshold! Or, if the innate force of truth threaten to outweigh the never-failing eloquence of opulent wrong, who shall prevent the secret interview—the proffered bribe?[32] What influence shall wrestle in the bosom of a weak or necessitous man against temptation when detection is almost impossible? and the public sympathy, if it heed at all, is ready to take part with the party whom it knows, rather than with him whom it neither recognises nor loves. Take away the hazard of exposure, the elastic, all-pervading, and sustaining pressure of public opinion, and you take away from juridical virtue that which is as essential to its being as the influence of the outer atmosphere is to animal life.

Corruption.

In the progress of deterioration all do not succumb to the evil influence at once. But where the conviction hath once taken hold, that the fruit of iniquity may be reaped with impunity, the belief too soon springs up that none are to be depended

[32] Xenophon, de Rep. III. 2.

CHAP. VII.

on. And where the opportunity of safe and lucrative injustice frequently recurs, the fine edge of conscience is turned; a little more ill-usage, and it becomes palpably blunted. Each one consoles himself with the poor excuse that he may profit much by that which costs the state but little; and thus, to use the mournful words of one who lived, perhaps, to grieve that he had hurried on the crisis of his country's fate, "by this private notion cherished apart by every one, the public interest and repute are sacrificed, and the common weal is imperceptibly brought down to ruin."[33]

But the evil of the self-overreaching system of colonial policy was perceived too late. Pericles himself could not admit, much less surrender, the vain pretensions to imperial rule that were the source of so much danger and demoralisation. Even by him the principle of payment was applied to the assembly. In the absence of any system of representation, those who held the legislative franchise exercised its power directly; and a full house, upon a party question at Athens, contained, perhaps, two or three thousand legislators. By the law of Ephialtes, each person who attended the sitting and recorded his vote, received three oboli.[34]

The obvious amount of these payments must have formed a serious annual charge, and when permanently added to the cost of the numerous festivals, the general distributions of corn, and

[33] Pericles' speech in Thucydides, Lib. I. cap. 141.

[34] Böckh, Book II. § 14.

other gratuities avowedly instituted for the purpose of rendering the life of the citizens easy without personal industry or toil, a ruinous burden was formed, which eventually destroyed the fiscal capabilities of the state. It was a system pregnant with corruption; but its worst consequences seem to have been less of a direct and computable kind than of a subtle and consumptive nature.

Poor-law.

Orphans, and citizens who, through age or physical infirmity, had been reduced to indigence, were entitled to receive an obolus a-day from the public fund set apart for the purpose.[35] When the spirit of self-supporting industry began to be relaxed, the pride of personal independence lost its earlier sensitiveness, and others were not ashamed to apply for public relief. When donations of corn[36]—those fatal gifts—were furnished at first by the munificence of foreign allies or the bounty of individuals, many who had never looked for public aid before looked then. The progress of pauperisation has ever been one of fearful celerity. The man who had stooped to be fed on one occasion, only needed some pretence, or the example of others, to stoop again. And from this degradation many never rose. The poor-rates were increased, and attempts were made to curb the growing mischief by resorting to growing penalties. Had not Solon made idleness a misdemeanour? Ought not every man to work who was able? Some were fined, some struck off the roll of those entitled to relief;

[35] Thirlwall, ch. 32. [36] Böckh, Book II. § 13.

CHAP. VII.

but the evil was inveterate, industrial energy had become enervated, and social pride had fled.

The law of Agyrrhius.

Many who were not ashamed to partake of the donations of corn, if not of the daily obolus, possessed the franchise. A decent cloak for permanently pensioning themselves was all that was required; and that the ingenuity of one Agyrrhius wove. He proposed a law whereby the pay of every one attending the ecclesia was raised from one obolus to three. Such a proposal was, of course, immensely popular, and it passed by acclamation; every body was pleased; but Athens thereby began, unconsciously, to commit suicide by slow poison.

Twofold ill effect.

The evils which this system wrought upon the strength and weal of the great Ionian commonwealth, these were twofold;—the one of a silent and subtle nature, working internally on the moral and intellectual susceptibilities, and developing its malific influence by degrees so gradual as to render its progress unperceived until the time when there might have been some possibility of arresting it had passed; the other of an opposite description, and dangerous to the existence of the state, from the effrontery wherewith, from the outset, it violated the most obvious sense of right and justice, and the pertinacity wherewith, in disregard of all remonstrance, it was persevered in to the end. By the former the national character was undermined, by the latter the national strength:—the one, because of those who received these stipends, the other, because of those from whose revenues they were extorted.

CHAP. VII.

The citizens were, as a class, taught to look in common to the tribute of the allies for support instead of to their own individual industry. The simplicity and directness of Greek finance rendered all mystification in this respect impossible. In the comedy of "The Wasps,"—the apt designation given by Aristophanes to the unproductive and mischievous swarm of jurors,—a favourer of the system is made to enumerate its resources and how they might be better applied:— Aristophanes.

"Now reckon over what a sum of tribute
Comes yearly to us from the subject towns,
Beside the hundredths, tolls, and import dues,
Mine-rents, and penalties, and confiscations,
Making in all well-nigh two thousand talents:
—What signifies from that the dicasts' pay,—
Some seven score and ten talents i' the year?
* * * * *
And were we not too much beguiled by demagogues,
Every one of us might with ease grow rich:
Do not a thousand cities yield us tribute?
Let each then be appropriate to twenty men,
Who thus luxuriously might well be fed,
Instead of looking, labourer-like, for daily fees."[37]

And in "The Knights," the poet introduces Cleon promising the people that, when they had conquered Arcadia, they should each have five oboli a-day. But his wit and invective were alike unavailing, for the temper and habits of the many were changed.

Industrial character.

To be employed, to learn diligently while young to work in some useful avocation in ripe years, and to endeavour to possess others with the benefits of experience, when the days of physical infirmity drew on, was, as we have seen, the practical idea of Greek

[37] In Vesp. Act II. sc. 1.

CHAP. VII.

worth. Warfaring, it is true, often absorbed too large a portion of a citizen's life-toil. But whatever its other evil consequences, war, as it was waged by a citizen soldiery, animated by patriotism, pride, or ambition, was far from interrupting the habits of endurance, which, during intervals of peace, were applied to better things. For the rest, what Hesiod sung—and Solon, as the common sense of mankind embodied in the forms of law—that every good man should have something useful to do—was established as an axiomatic truth of Ionic life before the trials and the triumphs of the Persian war. With the great expansion of commerce subsequent to that period, and the accumulation of wealth in private hands, a new class, possessing opportunities of leisure, arose. But their leisure, as it respired nothing but industry, tainted not the popular atmosphere with the breath of indolence. Intellectual pursuits of varied kinds, foreign travel, physical science, objects of art, education, engaged many of those who, having realised fortunes in trade, did not think fit to pursue the business of acquisition farther. Others, who were of a different mind, continued to follow the active callings which of so many lucrative kinds were open to them. But it was not the fashion to affect an idle or useless life, and, professedly at least, every man, beside the occasional participation in public affairs, had something to do.[38]

Politics a trade.

And so industry and its bracing exercises might have lasted long had not politics been turned into a

[38] Thucydides, Lib. II. cap. 40.

trade. But the fees to voters and to jurors introduced new thoughts and feelings, little in unison with those of self-sustaining legitimate industry. The wealthy of the merchants were not to be induced by them to leave their more congenial avocations. Some of the eupatridæ preferred residing in the country, or abroad, though by doing so, under the Attic system, they were debarred from the exercise of legislative power; and the same observation may be applied to a considerable section of those (possibly answering in some measure to our agricultural middle class) "who generally dwelt in the country, and did not trouble themselves much with going up to the city to take any part in politics."[39] All who from the force of individual character aspired to celebrity in their specific pursuits shunned, we may be sure, the time-wasteful court or assembly. After these deductions who remained? All who were by constitution feeble, or through ill-fortune needy—all who, through accident or their own culpability, had lost some of those advantages to which we are apt to ascribe the prosperity of our neighbours,—all who, having been once lured from virtuous courses, felt the resumption of self-denying toil rather more irksome than it used to be before to them,—all whom injustice had warped, ill-success disheartened, or the cold kiss of sorrow fascinated, till hope and energy were benumbed within their once quick-

[39] Schömann, Introd. p. v.

CHAP. VII.

beating bosoms;—all of these, the very elements that in every community it is the hardest task of eminent wisdom to care for with a silent and a gentle care—to stimulate, engage, and occupy,—for the energetic will be busy of themselves; these were they whom the excuse of duty which somebody must do, and the inducement of reward for devoting their time to its performance, gradually beguiled, first into frequent neglect of their business at home, then into confirmed disrelish for its more laborious and less exciting details, and finally into an appetite for judicial and political meddling, which, when it lacked plausibly useful objects, soon learned to find abundance of mischief to do. The ecclesia, which was originally designed to meet only at reasonable intervals, became an almost permanent body. When it had nothing else to do, impeachments of public functionaries, got up by the informers, filled the intolerable void. Every branch of the administration was the subject of its minute and capricious inquisition; and when to this are added the sad ingredients of party rancour and personal spleen, we cannot wonder at the decay of all healthful feeling which the narrative of Athenian life thenceforward mournfully betrays.

Devotion to the public service.

We can readily imagine, however, how long the self-delusion may have lasted with many men, that in this change of occupation they were rather meritoriously devoting their time and talents—as the saying is—to the public service; and, doubtless, too,

they flattered themselves with the persuasion that, as participants in the enactment of good laws, and in their just administration, they were engaged in the noblest work which man has here to do:—as if this noblest work were not the hardest also, if done, as it above all other work needs to be done, in the most workmanlike manner. But vanity is ready to come in at any call, and will offer to carry any load. The devotion of abilities and time to the public service is truly a right honourable sacrifice, —worthy of its reward. But if all other eminent gifts are rare among mankind, still more is this of fitness for supreme rule exercised, as it was at Athens, irresponsibly. With us, judges and legislators are few and accountable, if not in one way then in some other; even our jurors, who are left but questions of mere fact to try, are in each case few and amenable to opinion. But where a bench of justice was unlimited in number, and a legislature divided into majorities and minorities of thousands, the practical sense of responsibility was wanting, and the ground-swell of popular feeling, lashed by the breath of eloquence, was the sole element of law. Of the poor, listless, vain, splenetic man, who will not dig,[40] and to beg from individuals is still ashamed, turning patriot for want of somewhat else to do, and hugging his poor empty casket, largely inscribed with "devotion to the public service,"—what shall we say? Among the least harsh of those rebukes

CHAP. VII.

[40] Aristophanes, Aves, Act III. sc. 7.

CHAP. VII.

that his pestilent presumption merits and provokes, —that it were decidedly cheaper for society, were it possible to buy up all such devoted servants at their highest self-named price, with the understanding that upon no pretext whatever should any of the services be performed.

The cost of cheap judges.

The jurors at three oboli may have saved the expense of high salaries to a certain number of strictly professional functionaries. But dear judges her cheap jurors proved to Athens. The unfortunate system which called them into legal being, had in the end to answer for the creation of a permanent class of stipendiary men of public spirit. The industry of the country lost so many hands, while its consumption lost no mouths. Yet even this must have been but the first-fruits of the evil. When many were seen to devote their time to the public service for pay, many more began to think that they also had an occasional hour of their ignorance or thoughtlessness to devote ; what hundreds did often, thousands did occasionally, and the tendency was ever on the increase. Then suits became more frequent, fees were multiplied : and minor offices in the gift of the people were increased. Some learned to canvass, and forgot their trade ; and, while more than one branch of commerce died out among the Athenians, the only new trade that we hear of in those latter times was that of speeches-making. To this it literally came ; nay, the custom was so notorious that Plutarch tells,—not, indeed, without a sigh of shame and scorn,—who the

leading persons were in this line of business, and the prices which they got for an article of fair length and finish.[41] CHAP. VII.

But productive industry was undermined; and the habits of individual self-dependence, out of which so much of the greatness and goodness of Ionic life had sprung, were by degrees forgotten. Instead of each member of the community relying, as in less vain but braver days, on his own personal energy and perseverance, thrift and toil, the commonwealth came to be regarded by a large class of the citizens as a possession to be enjoyed in joint-stock amongst them; and their statesmen had of necessity a perpetual motive to suggest measures that either promised an immediate addition to the public resources, or that afforded new pretences for squandering such as already existed. Private acquisition was neglected in public expenditure, and thoughts of business in the craving for excitement. Craving for excitement.

The celebrated *theoricon*, or allowance to the poorer citizens, to enable them to attend the public festivals and amusements, became in time one of the most palpable, though hardly a criminally important abuse of the state. Originally it consisted of a gift from the treasury of two oboli to every registered citizen who chose to accept it, as the price of his admission to the theatre. If spent by him who received it on its professed purpose, the primary end was answered; and if retained to furnish more Theoricon.

41. Plutarch, in Vit. Orat.

CHAP. VII.

urgent wants,—though of this we hear but little mention,—it was probably deemed that a still greater good was accomplished. It is obvious, from the complaints to which it finally gave rise, that the drain it caused from the national revenue was vastly swollen beyond its original dimensions, but whether by the augmentation of the sum given at each time, or by the more frequent recurrence of distributions, does not very distinctly appear.[42] It has been estimated, with apparent justice, that the annual expense of the theoricon could not have been less than 7000*l.* or 8000*l.*,—an outlay of some importance, undoubtedly, to a limited exchequer, but which could not, in an economic point of view, have materially contributed to the impoverishment or embarrassment of Athens. But it formed a conspicuous link in the chain of indolent dependence on public resources for support, which the degenerate Greeks had forged for themselves, and to whose tasteful but ruinous weight they were continually adding. Being obvious and tangible, it was chosen by Demosthenes as an inexhaustible text, from which he hoped to harangue his countrymen back to a sense of national courage and self-denial; and in which he failed, as all others have done who believe that popular spirit or constancy is a crop to be raised from rhetorical seed. Eloquence is a noble element of power when that whereunto it is applied is sound:—it can smelt the ore and render

[42] Bockh, Book II. § 13.

it ductile, tempered, elastic, keen. But what can the hot blast do with the dross but prove it?— prove that it is indeed but dross, and not ore,— that it is fit only to be cast away? These financial antitheses of Demosthenes are truly of a ghastly brilliancy: they are the best Greek, 'tis said, that was ever spoken; and they were addressed to the best and most applausive auditory that ever sat to be— amused. But, after all, is it not manifest that they understood not Demosthenes, nor he them? Bitter, scornful Phocion, who made no speeches about the theoricon, comprehended the hopelessness of the case much better. In vain Demosthenes exhausted every trick of speech to wheedle his auditory into lending, he would hardly call it giving, a portion of the money they spent upon their luxuries and pastimes to national and useful purposes. He was worth hearing, so much so that "the house filled," as we say, when the great statesman was to speak. He rose, and—flattered them. They applauded, and he advised them. He told them that they were unconquerable if they would but give their state fair play. He thundered forth defiance of the foe in accents that they declared unsurpassable for grandeur and purity of diction; but, when he had ended, they went forth to eat and drink, unpersuaded and unrestrained, though he had proved that to-morrow the independence of their country must die.

For a moment, indeed, Demosthenes seemed to

CHAP. VII.

have succeeded; and he induced the assembly to enact or revive a law by which on occasion of impending war the pay of the troops was made chargeable on the Theoric Fund. But the effort of self-denial into which they had been cajoled was irksome and transitory; and Eubulus persuaded them, soon afterwards, to revoke what they had done, and, by way of silencing further importunity or remonstrance, it was decreed that, whosoever should in future propose to divert any portion of the fund to military purposes should be deemed a traitor.[43]

Evils of fiscal inquisition.

Other influences also were at work equally malign. While the excess of party spirit warped the popular judgment, over-taxation bent the once proud feeling of personal independence. Instances that had once been rare of persons falsely undervaluing their property grew common; that which had been in the buoyant days of national prosperity a matter of boast was become a cause for apprehension. We are not left in any doubt as to the cause. Wealth was formerly a means of enjoyment and power, because the prodigal state did not then covet its subjects' goods; and direct taxes were then paid cheerfully as extraordinary expedients to meet some transient need; but wealth was now a mark for exaction's aim, and, fear-stricken, it sought to hide itself idly or in exile. Many fraudulent devices were resorted to, and false returns made to

[43] Petitus, Leges Atticæ, Lib. IV. tit. 10, § 9.; Ibid. § 10, Commentar. p. 477,—4th year Olymp. 107.

the officers of public valuation.[44] Detection, followed by severe punishment, whetted the destructive appetite of inquisition into private circumstances and domestic life, than which no baser or more demoralising passion ever seized upon an overbearing and irresponsible assembly. Such a tendency is always evil, always to be withstood and banned while in its dastard incipiency; but, once matured, its taint is hard of cure, and hard in proportion as those who have been affected by it are numerous. A sense of oppression in the many, when an oligarchic government plays the odious part of fiscal inquisitor, seldom fails, sooner or later, to engender resistance and the means of extirpating the evil. But if a debauched or demented popular opinion sanction the pursuit, and the objects of its persecution are comparatively few, what chance of remedy, what hope of justice, what limit to the bitterness and hatred of those who, if not compacted self-defensively into conspiracy, are driven to seek for safety in desertion of their country and alienation of the wealth whereof it has proved itself unworthy?

Political vanity and social indolence grew apace. Constant occupation in business was become intolerably irksome. Work must somehow still be done: —why not, then, employ more slaves? The citizen's proper mode of spending life—as high names in philosophy averred, being in public affairs and refined leisure. Slaves were multiplied, their price

Increase of slaves.

[44] Bockh, Book III. § 6.

CHAP. VII.

rose, and the supply of them from abroad grew steady and extensive; but the elasticity and energy of free labour perceptibly sank in proportion;—its thrift and zeal were replaced by wastefulness—its practical business-habits were undermined:—can we doubt that the cost of production was fatally augmented, and that the fabrics of Athens were undersold in foreign marts, and not improbably in her own?

Lower wages and dearer food.

Murmurs begin to be simultaneously heard at the increased price of provisions and the difficulty of finding remunerative employment. Capital existed in greater masses probably than ever. For a certain time previous to the Macedonian conquest of the East, gold had, it is true, grown scarce in Greece—why, it were no easy problem now to solve. But that Athenian embarrassment and stagnation were not caused by such comparative scarcity, is palpable from the fact, that from the death of Alexander—while unheard-of and almost incredible quantities of the precious metals, liberated from the Oriental treasuries where they had for ages been accumulating, were poured, with undiscriminating prodigality, over the civilised world, and peculiarly throughout Greece—Athenian trade seems to languish more pitiably than ever, and all the evil symptoms of incurable decay develope themselves with more rapidity.

Food-usury.

The decay of industry brought with it a sense of distrust and uncertainty, whose baleful fruits began to manifest themselves in unsteady supplies and widely fluctuating prices. Then arose the cry of

provisions being too dear; and the populace, maddened with privation and incapable of disentangling the subtle web of mischief, in whose meshes their country lay, blindly assailed the corn-dealers, as the only source to which their sufferings seemed attributable, and called for the revival of the obsolete laws which prohibited engrossing. By one of these it had been forbidden that any person should, upon "the same occasion," purchase more than fifty times the contents of a phormus,—the wicker-basket ordinarily used in carrying corn. Such baskets were necessarily of a standard size, and they are supposed to have contained a medimnus each, that is, from eighty to ninety pounds. What the legal definition of "the same occasion" may have been we know not; but the lamentations of the orators at the continued practice of monopolising grain cease for a time only to break forth anew. Then we hear of novel remedies,—the dealers in corn not being allowed to charge more than a certain percentage as profit, under heavy penalties. This also proving futile, the eloquence of the demagogues waxes more and more hysterical, and the "food-usurers" must be punished with death: all which fury naturally proves wholly ineffectual,—obdurate corn-dealers, preferring to take the price of their goods at the risk of their lives, than to comply with the frantic law; or probably calculating, with smugglers' thrift, that they could better afford to bribe the revenue officers out of contraband profits than to do an

CHAP. VII.

unremunerative business upon philanthropic principles according to law. "Lysias cannot say enough of the villany of these men: the public loss was their gain; and so much did they rejoice at the approach of national distress, that they never failed in having the earliest intelligence, or they fabricated bad news — that corn-ships from the Pontus had gone down,—that certain ports had been blockaded —or that negotiations for peace were broken off: even in tranquil times did they frequently annoy their fellow-citizens at large, by buying up quantities of corn, and refusing to sell when it began to rise in price."[45] Demosthenes, too, found it politic to invent original epithets of reproach against these incorrigible dealers, and no doubt increased his popularity thereby. All agree, however, that neither eloquence nor edicts, persuasion nor invective, offers of reward nor additions to the peeping and listening corps who lived by informing,[46] neither pecuniary mulcts nor threats of death, availed to cure the evil. It had been marvellous indeed if they had; the cause of the evil lay elsewhere, as the orators probably well knew.

Supplies of foreign corn.

So long as the community was in a healthy state we hear nothing of "food-usury;" yet the population was then certainly greater, and the amount of national wealth was as certainly less. Neither is there any reasonable ground of conjecture that the

[45] Böckh, Book I. § 15. [46] Plutarch, de Anim. Tranquil. 38.

average supply of grain was withheld by those foreign nations who had long been accustomed to look to the Athenians as their best customers. But no supply is sufficient, and no price is low enough, for an unemployed people; and a community with artificial wants, large classes of whom depend upon fluctuating prices and wages for the means of comfort, if not of actual subsistence, stand far more in need of the morals and the means of profitable industry than a people who, unused to occasional seasons of expensive enjoyment, guard by habitual frugality against the bitterness of periodical privations.

The corn-dealers.

In seasons of embarrassment, when some of the provinces mutinied, and less tribute came in, or during a war that consumed large sums that otherwise had been divided in one shape or other among the population of Athens, the pressure of want became intolerable, and the vexation and discontent of the multitude wreaked itself upon the corn-dealers. The orators, whose business it was to watch, and if possible anticipate, their every humour and caprice, had always something fierce and patriotic to launch against a set of men easily assailed, and whom none cared to defend. But it is hard to believe that they were all equally sincere in ascribing the misery of the populace to the contraband monopoly of a small number of traders, who could no more have kept up a fictitious price of wheat in a perfectly free port like Athens, than they could have put floodgates on the Hellespont. That prices

CHAP. VII.

rose and fell rapidly and calamitously during the decline of the republic is indisputable; and probably the supply from abroad was at times irregular, though of that we rarely find mention. Irregularity, however, is fairly presumeable from the frequent and sudden oscillations from prosperity and lavish expenditure to panic, loss, and keen privation, to which the latter days of Athens were exposed. But it is hardly necessary to repeat, that such proofs of a diseased social condition are notoriously to be found in uncommercial states as well as those once eminent for trade; and we at least need not look far for a signal instance of the direful recurrence of such calamities among a people, all of whose food is grown at home, and who perish for want amid enough and to spare for extensive exportation.

Project of emigration.

The financial difficulties, from which Athens was seldom for any long continuance free, from the termination of the Peloponnesian war, engaged the solicitude of not a few men of sagacity and worth who took part in her counsels, and more than one of whom propounded schemes of amendment and reform. The impossibility of finding adequate and remunerative employment appears to have been the most pressing evil in Isocrates' time. He knew how keenly the same want of profitable occupation was felt in many of the tributary states; and he wisely judged that no more popular and useful measure could be devised than one, which would lighten the burden of useless hands at home, and at the same

time remove some of the restless and disaffected spirits that chafed at the ascendancy of Athens in the surrounding cities. He therefore recommended a plan of joint colonisation,—the colonies to be formed by selected persons out of the Attic and other communities, who, if they would bring with them all the good qualities they respectively possess, "agreeing only to omit on all hands the madness of their mutual hate," would easily find fresh lands beyond the sea to settle in, where they might not merely be secure of abundance for themselves, but for "all whom they would leave after them lacking necessaries at home."[47] Unfortunately, there is little that would lead us to believe that this advice, so wise as a palliative of existing evil, was ever practically attended to.

Rigid impartiality.

Lycurgus, who was head of the treasury for many years, and who probably understood better than most other men of his time the financial condition of the state, seems to have attempted no novel specific as a remedy, but to have relied rather upon rigid impartiality in the allocation and collection of the taxes, and vigilant economy in their outlay. Under his virtuous administration a temporary revival took place, so that he was able to provide funds for the repair of certain walls and fortresses that had fallen to decay, and even to devote considerable sums to the erection of new edifices of use and ornament in the city, without

[47] Isocrates, Panath. 33.

CHAP. VII.

imposing new taxes, or anticipating the future income of the state.[48] It was when he remembered these things that Demosthenes was wont to boast that, after all her losses, Athens possessed financial resources greater still than those of all Greece beside.

Xenophon's plan of financial reform.

A curious pamphlet, commonly ascribed to Xenophon, but the authorship of which is doubted, contains a summary of Athenian revenues, and then proceeds to give various suggestions for rendering them more profitable and secure. Among these, the most notable are a recommendation that increased favour should be shewn to foreigners, in order that they might be induced to take up their permanent residence at Athens; and a plan for the pre-emption of slaves by the state, in order that they might be sold to individuals at a profit, and hired out advantageously to those who farmed the mines.[49] It did not require Attic intelligence to perceive to what such a system must tend; but we do not find that any attempt was made to carry the suggestion into practice.

Proposed duties on tin and lead.

Another project for raising an additional revenue was, that which has somewhat inappropriately been termed a scheme for turning the import of tin and lead into a government monopoly.[50] The fact as stated by Aristotle seems to be, that the Athenians were advised by Pythocles to enable the officers of the port to receive all the lead and tin

[48] Plutarch, in Vit. Orat. cap. VII. § 11.

[49] Xenophon, de Vect. 14.

[50] Beckmann, Hist. Inventions, Vol. IV. § 21.

that was entered for duty in the ordinary way, and not to give it out for consumption under a payment of six drachmas the talent weight.[51] It is supposed that the ordinary price of lead was two drachmas;[52] the proposition amounted consequently to a duty of two hundred per cent on the average value; but this in no respect resembled what we understand by monopoly. The details of financial fair-speech and folly have for the most part perished; but enough remains to indicate their characteristics, from the first aberration from a sound economy, under Pericles, to the fatal struggle with Macedon. Thenceforward "the expenses of the state increased as public principle declined;"[53] and excessive taxation naturally followed in its train. An upright and able financier, like the treasurer Lycurgus, succeeded occasionally in bringing the income within the expenditure, or even in producing a surplus revenue for the time being.[54] But the evils were uneradicated; the high duties were not stricken down; the multitudinous pensioning of idleness was not diminished; the brief summer of unsubstantial emendation passed over, and Athens was not saved.

Decline of Athens.

No man any longer ventured to look the arrogant and indolent assembly in the face and tell it the wholesome, but insufferable truth, that, in its deformed constitution, its all-absorbing usurpa-

[51] Aristotle, de Cur. Fam. III.
[52] Böckh, Book I. § 6.
[53] Ibid. Book II. § 1.
[54] Plutarch, in Vit. Orat. VII.

CHAP. VII.

tion of functions it was utterly unfit to fill, — in its incessant meetings,—rash, violent, and inconsistent votings,—hollow sentimentalities of patriotism, and interminable thirst for rhetorical display, lay the real obstacles to any thing like a true and thorough reformation. To the last Athens clung to the hope of empire, and with its latest breath the assembly vowed that it should be maintained. But ideas of exaction and domination had idled the Athenian heart, so that it could not bear the thought of returning to the ancient ways of industry and self-sustenance; and the same evil habits, which daily indisposed her more and more to labour, unnerved her arm, and unfitted her to retain in subjection those on whose tributes she was dependent for the means of her luxurious life. The symptoms of this debility became soon perceptible, and the desponding citizen on the stage exclaims,—

> "Alas, what torpor now benumbs my hand,
> Too soft and feeble grown to grasp a sword." [55]

The ranks that had once been filled by Attic bravery were gradually supplied altogether by foreign mercenaries; till it was easier to raise a troop of "homeless vagabonds of all races and communities than one of native citizens."[56]

Without implicitly adopting the assumption that the financial principles of all the popular governments of Greece were similar to those of Athens,[57] and

[55] Aristophanes, Vesp. Act II. scene 1.

[56] Isocrates, Areop. 21.

[57] Böckh, Book I. § 1.

that the difference between her and them lay chiefly in the vast superiority of the resources placed at her command, we may console ourselves in some degree for the loss of their separate annals, by the recollection that, from the circumstance of her intellectual and political predominance, and the imitative disposition of the subordinate states, which her singular prosperity did not fail to keep alive, much of their original distinctiveness and individuality gradually wore away; and, as far as mutual intercourse or domestic industry were concerned, there were probably but few points in which the laws of Megara or Corcyra differed from those of Attica in later times. But as it is certain that Corinth and Ægina were enterprising and opulent communities before Athens had either arts or ships, so it is clear that, from the period when intoxicated with power she forsook the straight ways of self-dependent industry, we hear more of trade and manufacture in other cities. Besides Megalopolis, — whose foundation was owing to political rather than industrial causes, and whose prosperity, though greater than that of most cities rapidly forced into existence, can hardly be adduced as an example of a spontaneous aftergrowth of industry, — we are continually reminded of the mercantile eminence which Byzantium,[58] and other seaports of the Bosphorus and Euxine, seem to have gained.

From the pressure of taxation at Athens there

[58] Böckh, Book IV. § 19.

CHAP. VII.

can hardly be a doubt that capital sought refuge in these new emporiums. No direct assertion of the fact can, perhaps, be cited from contemporary writers; but few who know how silently capital takes counsel, and makes its most important movements, and who are furthermore aware of its instinctive power of discovering whither it ought to go, and its invincible tendency to migrate thither, will entertain much doubt as to the probabilities of the case; nor will they pay much heed to the inobservance, incredulity, or ignorance, of superficial chroniclers and essayists of the day. Some vague sense of the fatal revolution of which their own ruinous impolicy was the cause, weighed on the spirit of the more reflective Athenians; and there is abundant evidence of the feeling of tenacious rivalry that to the last subsisted between their state and every city that threatened to vie with her, either in wealth or shipping. To such extravagant lengths was this feeling carried, that Demosthenes, when he would persuade the assembly to yield a point which prudence and justice alike dictated to the Rhodians, thinks it indispensable to affect the insolence which he manifestly did not feel towards those whose rights he advocated: "I do not promise you that they will be generous in their turn to you, for they are Rhodians;" [59] — the truth being that, on different occasions, the brave citizens of the tripolis had shewn kindness, fidelity, and consideration for

[59] Demosthenes, Orat. in Rhod. 10.

the Athenians, to whom they owed little, except slight and injury. CHAP. VII.

We have seen the aptness of Greek industry for migration,—how often it had lifted anchors and put to sea in search of new holding ground when molested in its former one. And the old fugitive spirit of Phocæa breathes through all its history unto the end. Weary of the capricious tyranny of Athens, it had left that long-loved dwelling for ever,—left it to become a stipendiary for freedom on the liberality of Aratus, the Achaian chief;[60] and for bread[61] on the contemptuous generosity of Rome. From Corinth trade was, indeed, only driven by the brands of Sylla; but Rhodes, by the observance of a more sagacious policy, was enabled to retain comparative integrity, and to afford commerce shelter and security when a fugitive and despoiled elsewhere. Its ancient dwellings on the Asiatic coast, with the exception of Byzantium, sank by degrees; and, after the days of the Cæsars, it might be truly said that Grecian industry had no worthy residence of Greek foundation save at Rhodes and Alexandria. Migration of trade.

No people had ever shewn a greater willingness to be actively and laboriously employed than the Greeks of the ancient Ionic League. While chivalry bore rule their work, it is true, was principally warfare; but the rapidity with which they caught Asiatic Ionians.

[60] Pausanias, Lib. II. cap. 5.

[61] Thirlwall, Vol. VIII. 38.

CHAP. VII.

up every art of their Phœnician neighbours, and their steady advance and improvement therein, shews how apt their disposition was for habits of practical and persevering industry. Their energy decayed wherever their independence fell; but the cause of the effeminacy and sloth into which the Asiatic Ionians are described as sinking is often misunderstood. Their more fortunate brethren were too prone to paint rhetorical contrasts; and, having resisted the tyranny beneath whose sway the spirit of Ephesus and Miletus bowed, they glorified themselves not unfrequently by comparison with them. More generously and truly did the eloquence of after times recall their early services in the national struggle against barbarism and servitude. "They were the fence that long held back the foe; and their very foundation and maintenance was an expansion of Greece, and an infringement of Europe upon Asia."[62] And, after all, should we not rather wonder how much of vigour and worth these eastern states preserved for a long period, even in their vassalage? How many lights of Hellas came from the less fortunate shore of the narrow sea, which severed so widely their political fortunes, but not their literature, their arts, their social institutions, or their participation in the collective fame of their immortal race! Anacreon came from Teos, Anaxagoras from Clazomenæ,

[62] Isocrates, Panath. 7.

Thales from Miletus, and Herodotus was a Halicarnassian.[63] Industrially they continued during many generations, even after their loss of political liberty, to play a distinguished part; they consoled themselves for its loss, indeed, with too much luxury, until their hands grew too soft for energetic toil, and so at last they perished; but not until they had elaborated the most exquisite monuments the world has ever seen, and heaped up such sweet spices and rare fuel for their pyre, as seem, even yet, to breathe forth precious odours.

Rhodes. Rhodes was possessed of armed vessels before Homer's time,[64] with which she helped to clear the sea of pirates: we hear, also, of her wealth and colonies, as well as of her early league with other kindred towns for mutual defence, and the interchange of peaceful benefits.[65] One of these was Lindus, to whom the celebrated Cleobulus had early given laws, the spirit of which infused itself into the governments of Rhodes and Ialysus. These three resolved, during the distractions of the Peloponnesian war, to unite themselves together in an incorporate union; and in the year 408 B.C.,[66] the foundation of their joint citadel was laid. The wealth and fame of the new tripolis or united city-states soon surpassed that of most of its neighbours.

[63] To these might be added a host of others, eminent in various ways, who were Asiatic Ionians.

[64] Homer, Iliad, II. 668.

[65] Hermann, chap. 4, § 79.

[66] See interesting observations on the subject of the Rhodian tripolis. Niebuhr, art. on Scylax; Philolog. Mus. No. II. p. 254.

CHAP. VII.

Earthquake at Rhodes.

Few incidents of ancient or modern history are more interesting than the account of the great earthquake at Rhodes. In an hour the chief part of the opulent and beautiful city was laid in ruins; its temples crushed, its sculpture broken; its famed Colossus prostrated, and its extensive public warehouses and naval arsenals destroyed. The startling news spread fast and far; and the mercantile cities of Hellas, Sicily, Italy, Egypt, and Asia Minor, heard that their ancient, yet youthful, competitor had received a stunning blow, from which, like her own gigantic Pharos, none ventured to undertake the task of raising her. Was there open or secret exultation then? Or any unworthy ebullition of gratified jealousy? Where combination or concert must have been wholly impossible, they hastened as by one accord to proffer their sympathy and such aid as they severally could. The Rhodians sent embassies to make due acknowledgments for the friendly promises they had received; but in the meanwhile they waited not for their fulfilment. Like proud, brave, and wise men, they wasted no time in lamentations or despondency, but forthwith set about repairing the damage that had been done to their once busy docks and wharfs.[67] Their triple state had been originally formed by no foreign skill; and without foreign help, if need were, they would now rebuild it again. The earth and sea were moved, but their free, industrial spirit

[67] Polybius, Lib. V. cap. 87.

was not broken; and they probably knew that those are ever most likely to get help who are the most ready to help themselves. CHAP. VII.

If, however, their resolution was noble when, laying aside the festive robes in which ruin had overtaken them, they set about clearing the rubbish from their streets, and exhuming the victims who had perished in the fearful shock, equally noble was the realisation of the offers of their allies. Every city of Greece sent something, and the historian excuses himself for omitting their enumeration because they were so many.[68] These, for the most part, were now far less affluent than formerly; yet each of them gave "according to its ability." Commercial wealth had passed to other seats; but some of its best characteristics appear still associated with it. The powerful monarchs among whom the crude empire of Alexander had been parted were Greek, and the dynasties they founded long continued so in many respects. Each of them sent the Rhodians presents truly magnificent of money and building materials, as well as food. They sent them likewise skilled artisans, that needless time should not be lost in the restoration of their city.[69] Free gifts to Rhodes.

We can hardly attribute these memorable gifts to mere generosity. Without any wish to depreciate the moral aspect of what redounds so highly to the credit, in every sense, of all parties con- Motives.

[68] Οὐδ' ἂν ἐξαριθμησαιτο ῥαδίως οὐδεις.

[69] Polybius, Lib. V. cap. 89.

CHAP. VII.

cerned, it were irrational to regard such donations as those which Seleucus and Ptolemy sent as effects of a prevalent charity-fever. We must bear in mind what manner of men these were,—grasping, self-interested, rough-riding soldiers of fortune, bred in camps, inured to the presence of infinite suffering and misery, and hard masters over the lands they ruled by the sheer force of usurpation.[70] The unanimity of their donations and the singularly considerate nature of them alike indicate other motives than mere generosity. It cost Ptolemy little, perhaps, to lade his ships with grain, and hemp, and sail-cloth, which were cheaply manufactured in his kingdom; but a thousand talents in copper coin and three hundred talents in silver might well have been reserved, had not a mercantile intercourse subsisted between Rhodes and Egypt which the sagacious monarch deemed worth some sacrifice to preserve, and which the very circumstance of his choosing to send so much money in the less valuable Egyptian currency denotes. Neither would it seem extraordinary if we were merely told, that from the hill-sides of Lebanon timber had been sent by Seleucus for the reconstruction of the Rhodian edifices; for it cost him nothing save the labour of felling and removing it. But when in addition we find him selecting from his own squadrons ten quinqueremes fully equipped and armed, and when we further hear of his exempting all Rhodian ships of

[70] Appian, Hist. Rom. 10.

burthen from the payment of import-dues in his harbours, the inference seems natural that the lord of Syria thought he would promote the commercial interests of his realm, by conferring an obligation not likely soon to be forgotten on the renascent city-state.

Syracusan presents.

Nor were the states of Magna Græcia less prompt or liberal of their assistance according to their respective means. It was during the reign of the good Hiero that the terrible calamity had befallen Rhodes. Syracuse, like her, ascribed her origin to Doric founders; and, like her, had long to struggle upwards amid jealous neighbours and powerful foes. But, like Rhodes, her people had early embraced Ionic principles of industry and freedom; and though they preferred vesting the supreme executive power in a single and hereditary hand, which, like all other forms of trust, was oftentimes susceptible of abuse, they seem to have enjoyed all the substantial benefits of wise and equal laws that their elder brethren of Hellas boasted. Their gifts on the occasion in question were characterised by a peculiar refinement of friendship and consideration; and having contributed to the immediate necessity, and passed decrees exempting the Rhodian ships from port-dues of every description, they caused two statues to be erected, representing Rhodes in the act of being crowned as a victor by attendant Syracuse.[71]

[71] Polybius, ut supra.

CHAP. VII.

Maritime laws of Rhodes.

Restored to her former splendour and importance, Rhodes amply recompensed her benefactors by the active commerce she re-established and extended with each of them. From her geographical position, her nautical skill, the high character of her merchants, and, above all, the wise and elaborate maritime code, whereby every branch of commerce, and the charges, salvage, and freight of vessels, were publicly regulated, Rhodes for a long time continued to be, not only the chief carrier of the Levant, but the connecting link between countries that had no other tie in common. At length Rome came and swept all freedom and individuality away; but the wisdom of the Greeks perished not with their independence. Not merely were their conquerors fain to learn of them in every walk of literature and art, but they carefully adopted many of the usages and laws which had contributed to Ionic civilisation and glory. The entire of the commercial code of Rhodes was incorporated into that of the empire; and with so little modification that when the Emperor Antoninus was appealed to on one occasion in a cause arising out of the plunder of a wreck, he refused to vary the established practice in such cases, on the ground that, "though invested with the discretionary government of the earth, it was the justice of the Rhodian law that must govern the sea."

APPENDIX.

First Commercial Treaty between the Romans and Carthaginians.[1]

---

509 B.C.

POLYBIUS, Lib. III. cap. 22.

"BETWEEN the Romans and their allies, and the Carthaginians and their allies, there shall be peace and alliance upon these conditions:—

"I. Neither the Romans nor their allies shall sail beyond the Fair Promontory, unless compelled by bad weather or an enemy; and, in case they are forced beyond it, they shall not be allowed to take or purchase any thing, except what is barely necessary for refitting their

[1] The version here given is taken from Hampton's translation. A glance at the original will shew how much of the force of several important turns of expression is lost. But I have thought it better, for reasons that must be obvious, to adopt in the present instance the phraseology of one whose rendering of Polybius' meaning has long been established in public estimation, rather than to offer any paraphrase of my own.

vessels, or for sacrifices: and they shall depart within five days.

"II. The merchants [of Italy] that shall offer any goods for sale in Sardinia, or any part of Africa, shall pay no customs, but only the usual fees to the scribe and crier; and the public faith [of Carthage] shall be security to the merchant for whatever he shall sell in the presence of these officers.

"III. If any of the Romans land in the part of Sicily which belongs to the Carthaginians they shall suffer no wrong or violence in any thing.

"IV. The Carthaginians shall not offer any injury to the Ardeates, Antiates, Laurentines, Circæans, Tarracinians, or any other people of the Latins that have submitted to the Roman jurisdiction; nor shall they possess themselves of any city of the Latins that is not subject to the Romans: if any one of these be taken it shall be delivered to the Romans in its entire state.

"V. The Carthaginians shall not build any fortress in the Latin territory; and if they land there in [what might seem to be] a hostile manner, they shall depart before night."

Second Commercial Treaty between the Romans and Carthaginians.[1]

348 B.C.

POLYBIUS, Lib. III. cap. 25.

"Between the Romans and their allies, and the Carthaginians, Tyrians, Uticans, and their allies, there shall be peace and alliance upon these conditions:—

"I. The Romans shall not sail in search of plunder, nor carry on any traffic, nor build any city, beyond the Fair Promontory, Mastia, and Tarseium.

"II. If the Carthaginians take any city of the Latins not belonging to the Roman jurisdiction, they may reserve to themselves the prisoners, with the rest of the booty, but they shall restore the city.

"III. If any of the Carthaginians gain any captives from a people that is allied by a written treaty with the Romans, though they are not the subjects of their empire, they shall not bring them into the Roman ports: in case they do so, the Romans shall be allowed to claim and set them free.

"IV. The same condition shall be observed also [on their part] by the Romans: and when they land in quest of water or provisions upon [the shore of] any country that is subject to the Carthaginians, they shall be supplied with

[1] Niebuhr considers this to have been the third treaty, and that the second had been lost before the time of Polybius.

what is necessary, and depart without offering any violence to the allies and friends of Carthage.

"V. The breach of these conditions shall not be resented as a private injury, but be prosecuted as the public cause of either people.

"VI. The Romans shall not carry on any trade or build any city in Sardinia or in Africa; nor shall they even visit these countries, unless for the sake of getting provisions or refitting their ships: if they are driven upon them by a storm, they shall depart within five days.

"VII. In those ports of Sicily which belong to the Carthaginians, and in the city of Carthage, the Romans may expose their goods to sale, and do every thing that is permitted to the citizens of the [Punic] republic.

"VIII. The same indulgence shall be yielded to the Carthaginians at Rome."

BAYERISCHE STAATS-BIBLIOTHEK MUENCHEN

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

London:—Printed by George Barclay, Castle Street, Leicester Square.

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek

MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

MacCullagh, W. Torrens

The industrial history of free nations, considered in relation to their domestic institutions and external policy in two volumes

Bd.: 1

London (1846)

Pol.g. 600 d-1
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10769853-9